

**ENGLISH 517: 27  
ADVANCED SEMINAR  
IN THEORETICAL AND CULTURAL STUDIES:  
ENERGIES**

Fall 2019

Instructor: Dr. / Prof. Banting

Classes: Tu/Th 2:00 to 3:15

Classroom: SS 1153

My Office: Social Sciences Bldg (SS) 1010

Office hours: Tuesdays 3:30 to 4:30 (preferred mode of consultation with students)

Contact: (403) 220-5480; [pbanting@ucalgary.ca](mailto:pbanting@ucalgary.ca)

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

If energy is the ‘hottest’ issue of our time, then where, asks novelist and critic Amitav Ghosh, are our petrofictions? Where are the cultural-theoretical works, novels, literary nonfiction, plays, and poems about energy, carbon and climate change? As it turns out, in recent years there *has* been an outpouring of literature, film, photography, performance, plays and critical work in the field of the energy humanities or petrocultural studies, from the Black Gold Tapestry that was displayed at the Glenbow Museum in 2017 to land- and water-based projects of following pipelines and other energy transport routes, the Secwepemc Tiny House Warrior Movement, and *The Enpipeline Project*, an anthology of poetry in protest against the Northern Gateway project, to name just a few.

In this course we will examine cultural-theoretical, literary, video, and photographic representations of different forms of energy. What *is* energy? How are the processes of its extraction, refinement, distribution, and consumption represented in various mediums? How does language – is it “oil,” “tar,” or “bitumen” – affect how we view energy? How does energy affect our lives, our minds and bodies, our sense of place, and our sense of ourselves at the individual and national levels? How do our cultural narratives frame or ignore questions of energy? How does it *feel* to live downstream or downwind? What are the working conditions out in the field? In what ways are we emotionally bonded with motor vehicles? What is extraction in the broadest sense, and how does it affect not only us but other-than-human animals? Is there such a thing as an extractivist mindset (or the carbon imaginary), and in what ways is extraction related to colonialism? How do we acknowledge and interrogate our own complicity and denial when it comes to fossil fuel use, and how can we address climate crisis denial? Does environmental racism play a role in where hydroelectric dams and nuclear waste dumpsites are located? What words, ideas and tools do we need to rapidly decolonize our minds and decarbonize our atmosphere and the global ocean? Can literature and theory teach us what a post-fossil fuel world will be like? Are there ideas, ideologies and stories that can help us quickly transition to healthier, more sustainable and more socially equitable ways of living?

Students will have the opportunity to research, design and carry out their own critical-theoretical, creative and/or performative project on energy.

A few keywords: energy; petrocultural studies / the energy humanities; power; the carbon imaginary; climate change / everything change; infrastructural studies; energy in the arts; animals and oil; animal and human muscle; social transformations and energy transitions; alternative energies; observing and witnessing; actions and activism.

## **REQUIRED TEXTS:**

Imre Szeman, Jennifer Wenzel, and Patricia Yaeger, eds., *Fueling Culture: 101 Words for Energy and Environment* (energy glossary)

STUDENTS please order *Fueling Culture* via Indigo.ca or Amazon.ca (the U of C Bookstore cannot bring it into Canada). You may order it either as an e-book or a paper copy (for their e-books Amazon uses free Kindle software, Indigo uses free Kobo software, both downloadable from their respective sites – your choice). NOTE that if you order the paper copy from Amazon, it says on the site that the paper edition may take 1 – 2 months to receive so either order via Indigo or order the instantly downloadable Kindle or Kobo version.

Mathew Henderson, *The Lease* (lyric poetry)

Ken Ilgunas, *Trespassing Across America: One Man's Epic, Never-Don-Before (and Sort of Illegal) Hike Across the Heartland* (literary nonfiction)

Amitav Ghosh, *The Great Derangement: Climate Change and the Unthinkable* (literary criticism)

Cormac McCarthy, *The Road* (fiction: a novel)

Additional (free) individual readings, videos and photographs are listed on the class and reading schedule.

## **ASSIGNMENT PORTFOLIO:**

Research/creation project of your own design in consultation with the instructor: 30%

Appointments for compulsory brainstorming / consultations about your project proposal are during office hours.

Proposal (300 to 500 words) and annotated (one paragraph per entry) bibliography (4 entries): 10%

**due Sept. 19<sup>th</sup>**

Project (10 pp.): 20%

**due Oct. 24<sup>th</sup>**

Test, **Nov. 5**: 20%

Analytical research paper (10 – 12 pp. including endnotes and works cited): 20%  
**due Nov. 19<sup>th</sup>**

Final take-home exam: 30%  
**due Dec. 9<sup>th</sup>**

TOTAL 100%

### **IMPORTANT NOTES:**

**STUDENTS MUST COMPLETE AND SUBMIT ALL OF THE ASSIGNMENTS IN ORDER TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR A PASSING GRADE IN THE COURSE.**

**Grammar, punctuation and style** will be assessed with respect to all assignments during the course, not just specific assignments. Be sure you have and use a writing manual (the *MLA Handbook* or other).

**Active learning:** This course will be conducted as a mixture of lecture, class and small-group discussion, group work, optional field work (walking outside), and other forms of learning. A combination of various learning activities provides better absorption and integration of materials and stimulates further thought. Group discussion or group activities of any kind are not time fillers. Respectful participation in all such activities, not just lectures, is compulsory. An important part of intellectual work is being able to speak about it with others, and good insights are generated by listening and responding to others' observations. 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. This includes participation in discussion and other credit-free assignments and activities carried out during class time.

Regular, committed attendance of classes, taking extensive notes and studying are all essential to learning.

**Final exams in general:** As per university regulations, students must be available for examinations up to and including the last day of the examination period. There is no registrar-scheduled exam in this course, but your take-home exam will be due the first Monday after classes end, Dec. 9<sup>th</sup> no later than 3:00 p.m.

**Please download from D2L and save to your own computer both 1) this course syllabus and 2) the class and reading schedule** for easy reference throughout the term and so that you can access it at any time. Consult the class and reading schedule weekly so that you know which text(s) to bring to class each week and when assignments are due. You do not need to bring all of the course texts to each class, just the one(s) we are studying that class or that week.

**Test and exam:** Anything and everything we study in the course and for which you are responsible outside of class (e.g., completing the reading of the texts and watching of videos and films, etc.) may be test material.

**Research-creation project:** This project is both research- and experientially based. The following are not assignments as such but rather ideas to get you thinking about what you might like to do: An energy diary (an experiment in dramatically lowering your ‘energy slave’ usage, experimenting with an alternate form of energy – solar, muscular, other such as skateboarding, cycling, walking, sailing, canoeing); a photo essay (like a magazine article); a manifesto about energy or climate; an arty video (approximately 6 to 10 minutes); a series of three to five transcribed and edited short interviews with diverse people about energy/energies; other; a series of ten short poems or postcard stories related to energy that you copy and place around campus or around Calgary in strategic spaces (e.g., tied to trees with a piece of string, painted on stones placed in parks or on streets??) (submit both your poems/stories and reflection on your project).

**Terminology:** Only booklength works of fiction are called novels. 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. Genre is key to the reading and accurate comprehension of texts. In other words, the word “novel” is not simply synonymous with “book.”

**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 may use another easily readable font. Note that “fun fonts” do not make your work appear serious or professional.

**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 any due date. **The late penalty for assignments is one mark per day late.** That is, if an assignment merits a 20/25 (80%, A-) but comes in two days late, the mark will drop two marks to 18/25 (76%, B). This measure is in place in order to ensure a level playing field for everyone in the course and to facilitate timely completion both of your assignments and my marking. Timely completion is made possible by starting your assignments well in advance of their respective due dates: this also tends to create a better quality of work.

**Attendance:** 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 the professor are very important components of learning. Think of a course as a community, a group of living, breathing, thinking, responding, feeling, knowledge-creating beings not unlike you. A course is a kind of workplace or think tank, in effect. Intermittent attendance (more than a couple of absences per term) *always* (yes, always) results in losing one’s place in terms of the material and the others in the course and in lower grades.

However, if you are sick, by all means stay home and take very good care of yourself. Nobody expects you to come to class if you have a bad cold, the flu or a broken limb.

**Taking notes:** Recent research studies have shown that handwritten class notes are markedly superior in terms of acquiring a more thorough understanding of course material and for retention of material in one's memory.

Along similar lines, I highly recommend that you **annotate and underline** the course texts (preferably in paper, but you can annotate in ebook and electronic articles in formats such as the Kindle application). Don't try to preserve pristine copies of your books for resale to other students who will underline and annotate and therefore probably do better than you did in the course! Underlining and annotating in the margins are the best ways of acquiring and consolidating your knowledge of textual material. 'Make tracks' in your text (though not, of course, in any library books 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 far more efficient when it is time to study for a test to study your annotations and underlining in the text than to stare at pristine pages.

**Technology:** The instructor reserves the right to outlaw the use of phones, tablets, computers, or other distractions in class. **Surfing the web, checking email or social media, taking calls or texting during class is strictly forbidden!! Moreover, taking calls or texting by leaving the classroom is not allowed either.** Such behaviour is far more disruptive and distracting to you, the people near you and the professor than you imagine.

**Bring the text(s) of the day/week to class.** Please do not attempt to read the assigned materials on your phone! You cannot possibly ingest the texts on a screen as small as that of most phones. We are not studying literary texts simply in order to extract "the main idea" or "the general drift" of a text! Quite the opposite. We will be focussing on what is actually on the page. **For the same reason, you MUST bring the assigned reading(s) of the day to class. If you don't bring the text of the day to class, you are completely missing the point of literary studies, which is rooted in close textual analysis.**

**Double-sided printing of assignments is very highly encouraged** in order to save paper and trees. Please feel free to use factory-recycled paper or even paper that has already been used on one side only. This is not only permissible but admirable. Just draw a line diagonally through material printed or written on the "wrong" side and make sure your pages are stapled in order as you would for any assignment. Your grade will NOT suffer if you use recycled or previously used paper.

**No folders necessary.** Please **DO NOT** use any plastic cover sheets for your assignments. They have an annoying tendency to flap shut while one is trying to read and mark them, and using plastic contributes to waste, chemical pollution and the generation of even more carbon. Just a simple staple in the upper left-hand corner of the assignment is perfect. Please staple (or clamp, if you prefer) your work before handing it in. I do not normally carry a stapler with me to and from class nor is there likely to be one in the classroom. Handing in unfastened work increases the chances of loss of your work, late penalties, etc., and paper clips often grab onto and attach to other papers in a pile of papers and cause havoc.

**Submission of assignments.** Written assignments are due at the beginning of class on their respective due dates, and they must be physically handed to the instructor. At this point, I

cannot accept electronic submissions (which is too bad as it would save paper and trees) because they are just too hard on the eyes. If you absolutely cannot hand me your work in class, then do not shove your professional work under my (or anyone else's) office door. It can and does get trampled and muddied, lost, put under the wrong professor's door, discarded, etc. Instead, if you must, hand them in via the English Dept. office between 8:30 and 4:30 (the office is closed from 12:00 to 1:00) or outside regular business hours via the wooden Essay Drop Box just outside the English Department office. Assignments are date-stamped by the office staff at about 4:00 so if you have a strict deadline you should submit your work before 4:00. NOTE: The English Office is on the 11<sup>th</sup> floor of the Social Sciences Bldg. But if you hand your work directly to me, you avoid all these complexities.

**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 such deficiencies, errors or infelicities – or even if your writing is very good, you can always improve along the lines I highlight – prior to submitting your next assignment. (In other words, you don't want to make the same errors, infelicities or omissions over and over.) To that end, I may ask you to submit both your new assignment and the previous (marked and graded) one with all its comments so that I can note and acknowledge any improvements / progress so please save your marked assignments. Do not recycle them.

### **Grading system:**

**The Desire 2 Learn (D2L)** system keeps a running total of your marks, and your final grade will simply be the letter grade corresponding to the accumulated number of marks you have earned in your assignments by the end of the course. You yourself can also, of course, keep your own running total by saving your graded and returned assignments and adding up the marks you earn as you go. The standard table below correlates percentages with letter grades and GPAs. This grading scale is standard across the Department.

Please note that, according to the University Calendar (F.1), instructors may use their discretion when rounding upwards or downwards when the average of term work and exams is between two letter grades.

Although the A+ is solely an honorific that entails no additional points in the 4-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.

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

### **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-5.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 [smecuofc@gmail.com](mailto:smecuofc@gmail.com).

### **English Department Website:**

For more information about courses, programs, policies, events and contacts in the Department of English, please go to our website at <https://arts.ucalgary.ca/english>. 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:

[https://library.ucalgary.ca/sb.php?subject\\_id=52619](https://library.ucalgary.ca/sb.php?subject_id=52619)

**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>

**Student Accommodations:**

**ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS**

The student accommodation policy can be found

at: [ucalgary.ca/access/accommodations/policy](http://ucalgary.ca/access/accommodations/policy).

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

[ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy](http://ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy).

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

at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy.pdf>.

**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 Arts Students’ Centre (ASC) is your information resource for everything in Arts! Drop in at SS102, call us at 403-220-3580 or email us at [ascarts@ucalgary.ca](mailto:ascarts@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 3rd 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:** <https://www.ucalgary.ca/student-services/ombuds/role>

**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://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>

Students who are absent from class assessments (tests, participation activities, or other assignments) should inform their instructors as soon as possible. Instructors may request that evidence in the form of documentation be provided. If the reason provided for the absence is acceptable, instructors may decide that any arrangements made can take forms other than make-up tests or assignments. For example, the weight of a missed grade may be added to another assignment or test. For information on possible forms of documentation, including statutory declarations, please see

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/m-1.html>.

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

According to the University Calendar;

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k-2.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.