

FACULTY OF ARTS  
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH  
COURSE OUTLINE

**Syllabus**

**English 517**

**Cultural Memory/ Cultural Organizing**

**Instructor: Dr. Larissa Lai**

**Session: Spring 2021**

**Time: TuTh 1:00pm - 3:45pm**

**Class Dates: May 5 - June 17, 2021**

**Classroom: Online, synchronous**

**Office: online**

**Office Hours: TuTh after class, or by appointment**

**Email: [larissa.lai@ucalgary.ca](mailto:larissa.lai@ucalgary.ca)**

**Course Description:**

This course will address Canadian and Turtle Island anti-racist cultural events, movements and debates of the last thirty years and their contributions and impact on Canadian/ Turtle Island literary communities, specifically: Telling It, Writing Thru Race, the 1993 International Dub Festival, It's a Cultural Thing, the Appropriate Voice, and In Visible Colours. Though there are many more that could be addressed, we will focus on these six in order to contain the conversation. We will track the progress of key debates including cultural appropriation, the use of the term "people of colour", the problematics of equity, the concept of revolution, and more. The main question this class asks include: How did the cultural events of the 1980s and 1990s influence contemporary cultural production? What does Canadian and Turtle Island literature look like if we understand it through the lens of cultural gatherings (instead of, for instance, prize culture, or the literary anthology)? What were the key debates, conundrums and contradictions on the table thirty years ago? How and why have they shifted? What were the terminologies of thirty years ago, and how and why have they shifted? How can we understand our own cultural history differently through the lens of these events? What does it mean to remember? How is memory culturally productive?

**Required Texts:**

Brand, Dionne. *A Map to the Door of No Return: Notes to Belonging*. Doubleday, 2002.

Chrystos. "Chrystos Interview Lillian Allen at Wisdom Council." TIA House: The

Insurgent Architects' House for Creative Writing.

< <https://www.tiahouse.ca/episode-1-chrystos-interviews-lillian-allen-at-wisdom-council/>>

Cooper, Afua. *The Hanging of Angelique*. Harper Collins, 2006.

Gagnon, Monika Kin. *Other Conundrums: Race, Culture and Canadian Art*. Arsenal Pulp, 2000.

Goto, Hiromi. *Chorus of Mushrooms*. NeWest, 2014.

Hassan, Jamelie and Tyler Haller "Sister Speak to Me: A Tribute to Zahra Kazemi".  
<<http://www.jameliehassan.ca/>>

Keeshig, Lenore. "Stop Stealing Native Stories."  
< <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/cultural-appropriation-stop-stealing-native-stories/article35066040/>>

L'Hirondelle, Cheryl and M'Girl: Eyes Wide Open:  
<<https://amara.org/en/videos/uXnfW6l4lGEz/info/eyes-wide-open/>>

L'Hirondelle, Cheryl. Profile for the Governor General's Award:  
<[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dw25nT2cnt0&ab\\_channel=CanadaCouncil](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dw25nT2cnt0&ab_channel=CanadaCouncil)>

Miki, Roy. *Flow: Poems Collected and New*. Talonbooks, 2019.

Onodera, Midi. "The Displaced View." (link provided)

Onodera, Midi. "Skin Deep." (link provided)

Onodera, Midi. "Interview with Leila Sujir." <  
<https://www.cfmdc.tv/events/superwomen-2-screening>>

Onodera, Midi. "Interview with Zainub Verjee."  
<<https://www.cfmdc.tv/events/superwomen-7-screening/>>

Lee, SKY. *Disappearing Moon Cafe*. NeWest, 2017.

Moses, Daniel David. *Almighty Voice and His Wife*. Playwrights Canada, 2009.

Tator, Carol et al. *Challenging Racism in the Arts: Case Studies of Controversy and Conflict*. UTP, 1998.

Sujir, Leila. "India Hearts Beat." (link provided)

Verjee, Zainub. "IN VISIBLE COLOURS: The Making and Unmaking of the Women of Colour and Third World Women International Film and Video Festival and Symposium." < <https://www.otherplaces.mano-ramo.ca/zainub-verjee-in-visible-colours/>>

1993 Funky Revolutions (Radio Program)  
<<https://ia803209.us.archive.org/18/items/dub-poets-1993-funky-revolutions/Dub%20Poets%201993%20Funky%20Revolutions%20.mp3>>

### **Course Requirements:**

Each student will give three presentations over the course of the term, worth 20% each. In addition, there will be a final assignment worth 30%; and a participation portfolio worth 10%. Please note that there will be no Registrar-scheduled examination for this course, and that all assignments must be completed to be eligible for a passing grade.

1. Event presentation (20%): Each week (approximately) we will discuss one event. The event presentation makes use of the class reading for that week (from *Other Conundrums*, *Challenging Racism in the Arts*, or a digital source, as outlined in the weekly schedule) plus any additional research you wish to add. This presentation answers most of the following questions: When and where did the event occur? Who was there? What was the

event about? If there was a conflict or controversy that unfolded, what were the stakes? What were the arguments in support of the main positions held? What were the impasses or contradictions that participants were attempting to work out? What were the terms of the impasses or contradictions? (ie If the impasse was around the exclusion of people of colour, how was "exclusion" understood? How was the term "people of colour" understood? How was "whiteness" understood? Were any of the terms understood differently by the various participants? What did the range of understandings of any particular term look like?) What was the long and short term history of the event? How did the cultural field change in its aftermath? If there are other questions you wish to answer, or other responses to the event that seem important to raise, by all means raise and/or answer them. If the presentation demands a different set of questions, by all means pursue them, but be aware that the questions posed here form our main line of inquiry.

2. Creative text presentation (20%): Each week we will discuss one or more creative text written/made by an event participant. Some questions you may wish to consider: Who is the writer/maker? How were they involved with the event under discussion? Does the creative text respond or seem to emerge from the event in any way? What does the text do on its own terms? Does it make a narrative, poetic, poethical, critical, political or aesthetic intervention in the field of what preceded it? What does that intervention look like? Why is the text important to the event and/or to the the field? How is the text connected to the body/experience/cultural history of the author? What are its historical and/or genealogical underpinnings more broadly?

3. Archival presentation (20%): Search the library or the internet for further information on the event under discussion, in order to supplement the knowledge provided by the assigned reading. If it is possible to get into Special Collections, you may search there also. These days, however, a wealth of information has been digitized, and can be found on the web. What can you add to the knowledge we've already discussed, in terms of who was present, what the debates were, what the terms of the debates were, what further responses, arguments, critiques, writing or other cultural production might have emerged from the event?

Each presentation should be 10-12 minutes long for 607 students, or 7-10 minutes long for 517 students. Students will be penalized for going too short or too long, so **time your presentation carefully**. The key is to draw out a few important ideas; you do not need to be comprehensive.

If there are two or more texts up for presentation on a given day and two or more presenters, each presenter must present on a different text. On days when there are two presenters on the same text, presenters must coordinate in advance to ensure they are offering sufficiently different presentations.

**Please close the presentation with two well-thought-out questions designed for discussion purposes.** We may refine one or both of them, then take them/it up for further elaboration in class. For the presentation, **please give me and your classmates a visual aid**, so we can follow you. This may be a handout, Powerpoint/Keynote/Prezi slides or some other aid of your choice. Please also put your discussion questions on the handout or slides.

After your presentation, you will hand in a précis (concise summary) of your presentation (2-4 pages for 517 students. 3-6 pages for 607 students). Précis due: one week after you present. **Write the précis in the present tense**, as though it were the presentation. ie. "I argue that..." rather than "In my presentation last week I argued that..."

3. Final assignment (8-10 pages for 517 students; 12 - 15 pages for 607 students) (30%):  
The final assignment may take one of three forms:

a) The final assignment may be a polished, substantive revision of one or more of your presentations. It should deepen, complicate and elaborate upon the presentation content. Please do not simply add on to what you presented in class. **The revision must be substantive.**

b) The final assignment may be a new, conventionally-structured academic paper, 8-10 pages for 517 students, or 12 - 15 pages for 607 students. It may emerge from one of your own questions or comments in relation to course material, or questions or comments from me or a classmate. You are strongly encouraged to come discuss this with me before you embark on it.

c) The final assignment may be a critical-creative project of your own devising that addresses the concerns of the course. It should require the equivalent labour 8-10 pages for 517 students, 12 - 15 pages for 607 students. Its content must be your original work. It may take the form of a chapbook, a zine, a video, a podcast, a web page, a monologue, or another structure of your choice. Please come to my office hour or make a separate appointment to discuss this project with me before you embark on it.

**Final assignment due: Friday, June 18, 2021.** You can email your assignment to me at: [larissa.lai@ucalgary.ca](mailto:larissa.lai@ucalgary.ca). **Please put "English 517/607 Final Assignment" in the subject header so I can find your work. Recognize that it may get lost if you do not. Note also that the deadline gives you one day after the end of the course to turn the Final Assignment in. This means you must get a start on it early.**

4. Participation and Participation Portfolio (10%):

You will earn your participation grade in the following manner:  
The day before we meet, ie., every Monday and Wednesday, you will email one question to me in relation to the text(s) under discussion for that day. In order to keep this exercise from getting out of control, or getting too onerous, please make your contribution clear, concise and to the point. A single paragraph of two to six well-considered sentences is plenty. One sentence is not enough. More than six sentences is too much. I will make a handout consisting of all the submitted questions, which will then form the basis for class discussion.

Your general in-class participation will also be taken into consideration. Good participation entails active contribution to class discussion. In both your questions and

comments, please strive for clarity of expression. You may, if it is pertinent, introduce texts and ideas from outside the syllabus; however, if you do so, you are required to explain that text or idea to the class in a way that those who are unfamiliar with the text or idea can clearly make sense of what you are saying. Ideally, you make intellectual space for productive response. “Star” behaviour, name-dropping, intentional obfuscation and other forms of academic bullying are strongly discouraged and will be penalized. A good seminar participant has done all the reading in time for class and given it serious thought. They voice thoughts, opinions and responses regularly, though always at an appropriate moment. They also have regard and respect for the ideas and language of classmates, the ideas and language of the texts, and the contexts from which both texts and classmates emerge. They listen actively, and do not monopolize conversations. Students are expected to have read to the end all readings listed for the date of the seminar. You may skim the one very long text (ie. *Flow*). You will be expected to read the shorter texts from beginning to end.

Attendance will also be considered.

The participation portfolio should contain questions emailed to me and any comments prepared for class, all in one document. A key component of the portfolio for this class is the questions prepared on Mondays and Wednesday. In the unfolding of the course, these should be submitted punctually, and of course, should be thoughtful, informed, and well-considered. At the end of the course, they should be compiled into a single document so that I can easily see what you did over the course of the term. You may include in addition any other material that offers evidence of good participation, though this is not required. To be clear, then, you are required to submit each discussion question twice: Every Monday and Wednesday by email for class discussion, and again at the end of the course, neatly organized in a single portfolio. This is to facilitate fair and accurate grading.

**Portfolio due: Friday, June 18, 2021.** You can email your assignment to me at: [larissa.lai@ucalgary.ca](mailto:larissa.lai@ucalgary.ca). **Please put "English 517/607 Portfolio" in the subject header so I can find your work. Recognize that it may get lost if you do not.**

### **Reading:**

It is your responsibility to have read the text under discussion on the day it is discussed in class. Longer texts will not necessarily be discussed in a linear fashion. Expect spoilers.

### **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>

### **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/graduate>. 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: [maboyd@ucalgary.ca](mailto:maboyd@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 Department of English's graduate website for courses, departmental deadlines, and other related program information at <https://arts.ucalgary.ca/english>.

Consult the Faculty of Graduate Studies Calendar for university and faculty regulations, dates, deadline, fees, and schedules, student, faculty and university rights and responsibilities. The homepage for the Faculty of Graduate Studies Calendar is <http://grad.ucalgary.ca>.

For registration (add/drop/swap), paying fees and assistance with your Student Centre, contact the Graduate Office at 403 220 5484 or visit us in Social Sciences Tower 1148 in the first instance.

For program planning and advice, contact the Graduate Program Administrator at [enggrad@ucalgary.ca](mailto:enggrad@ucalgary.ca) to make an appointment with Dr. Suzette Mayr, Graduate Program Director.

**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 Deferral 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://www.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://www.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> .

#### **\*RESEARCH ETHICS (if applicable)**

If a student is interested in undertaking an assignment that will involve collecting information from members of the public, they should speak with the course instructor and consult the CFREB Ethics (<http://www.ucalgary.ca/research/researchers/ethics-compliance/cfreb>) before beginning the assignment.

#### **\*INSTRUCTOR'S INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY**

Course materials created by instructors (including presentations and 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 typical (or usual) classroom practice. Students' assignments will be accessible only by the authorized course faculty. Private information related to the individual student is treated with the utmost regard by the faculty at the University of Calgary.

#### **\*COPYRIGHT LEGISLATION**

All students are required to read the University of Calgary policy on Acceptable Use of Material Protected by Copyright (<https://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/acceptable-use-of-material-protected-by-copyright-policy.pdf>) and requirements of the copyright act (<https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-42/index.html>) to ensure they are aware of the consequences of unauthorised sharing of course materials (including instructor notes, electronic versions of textbooks etc.). Students who use material protected by copyright in violation

of this policy may be disciplined under the Non-Academic Misconduct Policy  
<https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html>.

**\*MEDIA RECORDING (if applicable)**

Please refer to the following statement on media recording of students:

[https://elearn.ucalgary.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Media-Recording-in-Learning-Environments-OSP\\_FINAL.pdf](https://elearn.ucalgary.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Media-Recording-in-Learning-Environments-OSP_FINAL.pdf)

**\*Media recording for lesson capture**

The instructor may use media recordings to capture the delivery of a lecture. These recordings are intended to be used for lecture capture only and will not be used for any other purpose. Although the recording device will be fixed on the Instructor, in the event that incidental student participation is recorded, the instructor will ensure that any identifiable content (video or audio) is masked, or will seek consent to include the identifiable student content to making the content available on University approved platforms.

**\*Media recording for self-assessment of teaching practices**

The instructor may use media recordings as a tool for self-assessment of their teaching practices. Although the recording device will be fixed on the instructor, it is possible that student participation in the course may be inadvertently captured. These recordings will be used for instructor self-assessment only and will not be used for any other purpose.

**\*Media recording for the assessment of student learning**

The instructor may use media recordings as part of the assessment of students. This may include but is not limited to classroom discussions, presentations, clinical practice, or skills testing that occur during the course. These recordings will be used for student assessment purposes only and will not be shared or used for any other purpose.

**SEXUAL VIOLENCE POLICY**

The University recognizes that all members of the University Community should be able to learn, work, teach and live in an environment where they are free from harassment, discrimination, and violence. The University of Calgary's sexual violence policy guides us in how we respond to incidents of sexual violence, including supports available to those who have experienced or witnessed sexual violence, or those who are alleged to have committed sexual violence. It provides clear response procedures and timelines, defines complex concepts, and addresses incidents that occur off-campus in certain circumstances. Please see the policy available at

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/sexual-violence-policy.pdf>

**\*OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION**

Please visit the Registrar's website at:

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/registration/course-outlines> for additional important information on the following:

- 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):**

"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."

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>.

**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/>

## **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.