



UNIVERSITY OF  
CALGARY  
FACULTY OF ARTS  
Department of English

**COURSE OUTLINE**

**English 517: Advanced Topics: Theoretical and Cultural Studies**

**The Hotel as Literal and Figurative Space in Contemporary Narrative**

**Winter 2022**

**Tuesday/Thursday, 12:30 – 13:45, Lecture**

**SS 06**

**On-line via ZOOM until in-person attendance resumes**

**Topic: ENGL 517 S01 - (Winter 2022) - Advanced Topics: Theoretical and Cultural Studies**

**Time: Jan 11, 2022 12:30 PM Edmonton**

**Please download and import the following iCalendar (.ics) files to your calendar system.**

**Weekly: [https://ucalgary.zoom.us/meeting/tJlqf-](https://ucalgary.zoom.us/meeting/tJlqf-ytrDkiG9WpLy43tU1l4j_Hj2fegm5n/ics?icsToken=98tyKuCuqTMvH9aXuBiGRowAB4qgZ-_zpnPHjfpqjDP8V3NHV1L6Yuh9GrgtFt3X)**

**[ytrDkiG9WpLy43tU1l4j\\_Hj2fegm5n/ics?icsToken=98tyKuCuqTMvH9aXuBiGRowAB4qgZ-\\_zpnPHjfpqjDP8V3NHV1L6Yuh9GrgtFt3X](https://ucalgary.zoom.us/meeting/tJlqf-ytrDkiG9WpLy43tU1l4j_Hj2fegm5n/ics?icsToken=98tyKuCuqTMvH9aXuBiGRowAB4qgZ-_zpnPHjfpqjDP8V3NHV1L6Yuh9GrgtFt3X)**

**Join Zoom Meeting**

**<https://ucalgary.zoom.us/j/96785522811>**

**Meeting ID: 967 8552 2811**

**Passcode: 714963**

<b>Instructor</b>	Professor Aritha van Herk, CM, AOE, FRSC
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:vanherk@ucalgary.ca">vanherk@ucalgary.ca</a>
<b>Web Page:</b>	D2L (access via MyUofC portal)
<b>Office Hours:</b>	Available for in-office consultations, 14:00 – 15:00, Tuesday and Thursday, after in-person university attendance resumes. Happy to set up Zoom meetings by arrangement.

Office: SS 1132

E-mail: [vanherk@ucalgary.ca](mailto:vanherk@ucalgary.ca)

I check e-mail regularly, usually within 48 hours; however, do not expect me to reply to a query within minutes.

Office hours: 14:00 – 15:00, Tuesday/Thursday

**(After in-person university attendance resumes)**

Twitter: [@maverickcalgary](https://twitter.com/maverickcalgary)

Homepage: <http://english.ucalgary.ca/profiles/aritha-van-herk>

**Course description:** Pre-requisite for this course: *6 units of English at the 400 level.*

This course will examine the space/place of the “hotel” as it is configured in literature, with an emphasis on its spatial and imaginative transgressions and revelations. Given their designation as placeless places, the purchasable anonymity of hotel rooms contributes to literary allusions that interrogate space as alienation or sensation. Hotels are theatrical or dramatically engaging destinations: they provide rooms where guests can be private, but they are public spaces where history and reputation add seasoning to their shelter. This slippage between the performative and the banal is one of their distinctive characteristics, a link between spectatorship and engagement. The discourse of the hotel, then, is reliant on its synthesis of private and public, offering a fusion of transient representation and simulation. These elements enable transgression and pleasure, experience and accident, the bookends of life and death as performed within this cultural space and then translated into fiction, film, and drama.

Key research questions for this course will include:

aspects of place writing in contemporary literature; creative explorations into representations of hotel sites; spatial and place-specific peregrinations; the friction between historical and contemporary depictions in multiple genres.

This class demands steady and ongoing work, handing in assignments during the term, attendance at classes, and serious focus. As part of the participation grade, outlined in the assessment components section below, regular attendance, either in person, or online, is expected. Students must be fully present and engaged, and should be prepared to discuss the reading, research, and writing, having read assigned material, with eloquence and wit.

**COVID: Obviously, you must not attend an in-person class if you are ill, if you have even mild symptoms, or if you have come into close contact with someone who has tested positive. This absence will have no adverse effect on a student’s participation grade.**

**This class requires that students read ALL the course texts.**

**This course encourages students to develop their critical acumen.**

**Yes, it is fun. Yes, it is a lot of work. Please plan ahead, using the Class Schedule.**

### **Course learning outcomes**

By the end of this course students will be able to:

- identify and interpret various literary strategies developed by setting and space;
- demonstrate readerly awareness of the synergy of form and content;
- understand and interpret textual material in relation to historical and cultural contexts;
- write a clear literary exegesis on the work under scrutiny;
- apply a honed understanding of how language, image, description, and dialogue work;
- employ critical tools to analyze writing and to discuss key issues in the area of communication;
- write a convincing academic paper using the academic conventions of English

## **Texts and readings:**

Anita Brookner, *Hotel du Lac*

Agatha Christie, *At Bertram's Hotel*

Robert A. Davidson, *The Hotel: Occupied Space*

John Irving, *The Hotel New Hampshire*

Stephen King, *The Shining*

Eimear McBride, *Strange Hotel*

Ali Smith, *Hotel World*

Emily St. John Mandel, *The Glass Hotel*

Amor Towles, *A Gentleman in Moscow*

Available virtually and physically from the University of Calgary Bookstore

*Barton Fink*. Dir. Joel and Ethan Coen. 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox, 1991. DVD.

*Up in the Air*. Dir. Jason Reitman. Paramount Pictures, 2009. DVD.

Available through Criterion on Demand, the University of Calgary Library.

## **Learning technology requirements:**

Because we are going to be on-line until at least the end of January, please be prepared to work online via ZOOM.

The D2L site for this course contains all relevant class resources and materials.

In order to successfully engage with your learning experience at the University of Calgary, students taking this course will need to have reliable access to the following technology:

- A computer with a supported operating system, as well as the latest security, and malware updates. Computers are bookable at the library.
- 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:**

Class Participation and Overall Participation

(Based on timely submission of assignments, lecture attendance and preparation, discussion contributions, and critical acumen in seminars): 10%

Initial paper: (2 pages) 10%

Short paper: (5 pages): 20%

Long paper: (10 pages): 30%

Final Paper, which may be a creative response, or analysis of an alternate text (20 pages): 30%

TOTAL 100%

**There is no FINAL EXAM in this course.**

**There are no opportunities for extra credit in the course.**

**\*\*NB Students must complete ALL assignments to receive a passing grade.**

**One missing piece will result in a final grade of F.**

## **Attendance and participation expectations**

Detailed records on attendance and in-class contributions will be used in the calculation of the participation mark. Attendance is an aspect of participation  
<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/e-3.html>

Students are expected to attend class regularly and to be fully present and engaged in class activities and discussions (given COVID circumstances). These are part of the participation grade, as outlined in the assessment components section above. If for reasons of illness or other unusual event students miss a class session included as a component of participation, they should contact the instructor to discuss options.

**COVID REMINDER: You must not attend an in-person class if you are ill, if you have even mild symptoms, or if you have come into close contact with someone who has tested positive. This absence will have no adverse effect on a student's participation grade.**

There is NO final EXAM in this course. Students are graded on their reading, participation, critical acumen, and written assignments.

### **Late Assignments or Absences:**

Assignments submitted after the deadline will be penalized with the loss of a third of a grade (for example, an A- to B+) for each business day (not class) that the assignment is overdue.

**Constraints:** I am thoroughly sick of the word “thing” standing in for every object, event, emotion, or idea. Use of the word “thing” in your papers will be penalized with the loss of a third of grade (for example, from an A- to a B+). Expand your vocabulary.

**Submission Protocol:** All assignments are due to your professor via email, submitted as a doc or docx e-mail attachment to Professor van Herk ([vanherk@ucalgary.ca](mailto:vanherk@ucalgary.ca)) by the beginning of class time due date on the Class Schedule. Assignments should be double spaced, and should employ a clear simple type, in font size 12. Do NOT submit a PDF.

Assignments submitted after the deadline will be penalized with the loss of a third of a grade (an A- to B+) for each business day [not class] that the assignment is overdue.

**Your paper must be identified as follows: 527, your last name, assignment #.doc. It is your responsibility to keep backup copies of all assignments in case of technical glitch or loss.**

### **Grading System:**

The University of Calgary's official four-point Grading System, as described in the Calendar will be used in this course. <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/f-2.html>  
A+/A (4.0); A- (3.7); B+ (3.3); B (3.0); B- (2.7); C+ (2.3); C (2.0); C- (1.7); D+ (1.3); D (1.0); F (0)

## **My Explanation of Grades:**

A-/A/A+: Exceptional work

B+/B/B-: Good work

C+/C/C-: Average/Satisfactory work

D range: Minimal pass

F: No Credit

Students must reach the minimum percentage threshold for the grade range to receive that letter grade (e.g., to receive an A- a student will have surpassed the minimum threshold of 80.00% in the course).

Although the A+ is solely an honorific that entails no additional points in the four-point system, the course instructor will employ this mark to distinguish superlative work that exceeds expectations in style, correctness, intellectual depth and breadth, sophistication, and originality. The interpretation of the undergraduate university grading system can be found at <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/f-1-1.html>

**Grading:** Your final grade will consist of an evaluation of all the work you hand in. All assignments are graded (using the letter system) and returned to you. Your attendance and contributions are part of your participation grade. You are expected to attend class and to contribute to class discussion. Your writing and analysis should demonstrate a degree of sophisticated textual and theoretical awareness.

### **Conduct and Integrity:**

Although we are understandably affected by the current pandemic, students are 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>

Academic or non-academic misconduct will NOT be tolerated. Every text that you send, every comment that you make (on ZOOM, on D2L, or in Chat) is public, not anonymous, and is part of your university record. Inappropriate comments of any nature will be followed up with corrective action. Racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic or any other prejudicial comments will be called out and dealt with appropriately.

### **Masking:**

To promote a healthy and safe learning, environment in accordance with Alberta Health requirements, non-medical face masks must be worn in **all indoor areas** on University of Calgary campuses. You will be asked to leave class if you are not masked.

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/risk/emergency-management/covid-19-response/covidsafe-campus/masks>

**Policy on use of electronic devices:**

We are all at the mercy of social networking, cell phones, text messages and e-mail, but in this class, we need to concentrate on reading and writing. Laptops and mobile devices should be used in a manner appropriate to the course and class activities. Please refrain from accessing websites and resources that may be distracting to you during class time. You are not to take screen shots, surf the net, text message your friends, play games, or do assignments for a different class. Cell phone notifications are to be turned off during class; please do not entertain us with dings and ring tones. Students are responsible for being aware of the University's Internet and email use policy, which can be found at <https://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/electronic-communications-policy.pdf>

Once in-person, we will be in a wireless-access classroom. You may take notes and work on a laptop in class. You are to use your device as a tool to accompany the context of what we are learning and discussing. You are **NOT** to surf the net, text message your friends, play games, or do assignments for a different class. Cell phones are to be turned **OFF** in class.

**Food, Drink, etc.:**

Students may drink coffee or water or juice in class, but I would request no consumption of food.

**How to Do Well in this Course:**

1. Read the texts. Attend class. (**Given COVID of course. Obviously, you must not attend an in-person class if you are ill, if you have even mild symptoms, or if you have come into close contact with someone who has tested positive. This absence will have no adverse effect on a student's participation grade.**) But you will have difficulty passing if you do not attend, if you do not read the assigned material in advance, and if you do not participate in discussion.
2. Students who work steadily throughout the term perform better than students who put off assignments. However, if you are ill or experiencing other difficulties, do let me know so that appropriate accommodation can be made for your circumstances.
3. The assignments you submit to the instructor must be double-spaced, with at least 1-inch margins, and must use a clear font so that it can be read easily. Ensure that your name and your student number is on your paper and that the pages are numbered in sequence. All writing must be submitted to Professor van Herk's email address as a doc or docx attachment (not a PDF).
4. Familiarize yourself with the Course Outline. Many of the questions that you will ask are clearly answered in this Course outline. Follow the separate Class Schedule for this class. Use it to plan, and to make effective use of your time.
5. Class participation (discussion) is a part of the graded component of this course.
6. If you are having difficulties of any kind, or if you have questions, please feel free to e-mail me. Outside of regular office hours, am happy to arrange a time to speak with you on ZOOM. Do not hesitate to inform me of potential difficulties because I may be able to help you solve them.

### **Guidelines for in-class discussion:**

Students will be marked for the quality of their engagement with the material, receiving merit for the insightfulness of their observations, critical questions, and the thoughtfulness of their contributions.

From the language that holds sway in daily conversation and from our abbreviated virtual language, a nuanced vocabulary may seem archaic, but is increasingly desirable. The current reliance on “thing,” “you know,” and “like” are especial markers of a lazy tongue. A key objective of this class is a focus on improving your eloquence and wit by moving beyond such limited vernacular. Please note your oral fixatives and work to enhance your eloquence.

In terms of evaluative positions and their critical expression, your personal tastes are less applicable than critical appreciation. When reading any text, the questions you must confront are not whether you “liked” the material, but how it is developed, with reference to literary elements. Also, learning is about confronting uncomfortable ideas, and during this class, we are likely to encounter sensitive material.

### **Academic Integrity:**

This course, like all courses at the University of Calgary, holds students to high standards of honest and responsible scholarship. Please consult the [Academic Integrity website](#) for a detailed description of university policies, which will be enforced in this course. Cases of suspected academic misconduct will be referred to the Associate Dean of Arts for a ruling.

Plagiarism is a type of academic misconduct. Plagiarism occurs when a student presents the ideas, expression of ideas, or work of another person as their own. Another equally serious form of plagiarism occurs when a student submits something they have written themselves for credit in two or more courses without first securing written permission from all those course instructors. Consequences for plagiarism include failure on the assignment, failure in the course, and possible suspension or expulsion from the university. Using any source whatsoever without clearly documenting it is a serious academic offense.

### **Deferral of term work and final examinations:**

Should you require an extension for completion of term papers or assignments beyond the deadline of five days after the end of lectures, an [Application of Deferment of Term Work](#) must be completed. It is the student’s responsibility to initiate this process with the instructor. The University also has regulations governing the [deferral of final examinations](#).

### **Grade appeals:**

To pursue a Reassessment of Graded Term Work or a Reappraisal of an Academic Assessment, Consult the [University Calendar](#) and request advice from the English Department at [engl@ucalgary.ca](mailto:engl@ucalgary.ca). Please note that mere dissatisfaction with a grade is not sufficient grounds for an appeal.

### [English Department Website:](#)

For more information about courses, programs, policies, events and contacts in the Department of English.

### **Scribe and Muse Club for English Students:**

The [Scribe and Muse Reading and Writing Club](#) fosters and champions reading and writing through community service, leadership, and engagement. Our email address is [smecuofc@gmail.com](mailto:smecuofc@gmail.com).

### **Writing support:**

[The Student Success Centre](#) offers both online and workshop writing support for U of C students.

### [Academic regulations and schedules](#)

### **Student Academic Accommodations:**

The Student Accessibility Services website is available [here](#). University accommodation policies can be found at the following links:

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/b-6-1.html>

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/b-6.html>

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/b-6-2.html>

**Program Advising and Student Information Resources** is done through the Faculty of Arts Students' Centre. Office location: SS102; phone: 403-220-3580; email: [ascarts@ucalgary.ca](mailto:ascarts@ucalgary.ca)  
Website: <http://arts.ucalgary.ca/undergraduate>

### **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/policies/files/policies/sexual-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.