

**FACULTY OF ARTS
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
COURSE OUTLINE**

ENGLISH 525.1: SEMINAR IN A NATIONAL OR TRANSNATIONAL LITERATURE

Course Title: Transatlantic Reading

Class Date and Time: TR 2:00-3:15 p.m. (Winter 2018)

Room: SS1015

Instructor: Dr. Morgan Vanek

Email: morgan.vanek@ucalgary.ca

Office hours: T/R 3:30-4:30 p.m.

Office: SS1106

Course description

In this course, we will study survival stories, or the sensational tales of exploration, captivity, and enslavement that became immensely popular over the course of the long eighteenth century.

Informed by new methods in transatlantic studies, we'll read these texts closely, treating them not as contexts for the rise of the 'real' eighteenth century novel, but instead as the foundations of a new canon with new stories to tell about the history of empire and the forms of literature and knowledge it has produced. Together, we'll interrogate the forces that compel these travelers to venture across the Atlantic in the first place, and we'll examine the nature of both the risks associated with the journey and those obscured by its sensational representation. By mid-term, your research projects will begin to explore the following questions: What constitutes 'survival' in these texts? How do these travelers' stories of survival, often under extreme conditions, help to prop up, critique, or otherwise interrogate the imperial project that sets them in motion? Whose voices are missing from the archive we produce by centering the circulation of bodies, goods, and resources facilitated by Atlantic crossings, and how might our understanding of survival in the Atlantic world change if we could introduce these additional perspectives? By the end of this course, you will be able to describe the origins and implications of the trans-, cis-, and circum-atlantic interpretative frameworks the field of transatlantic studies has produced so far, and you will be prepared to explain how, from the eighteenth century forward, the formal tropes of transatlantic literature – including stories of survival, displacement, and exile – have been leveraged to narrate new national identities increasingly grounded in land.

Required readings

- Swift, *Gulliver's Travels* (Broadview, ed. Ingram)
- Tanner, *The Falcon: A Narrative of the Captivity and Adventures of John Tanner* (Penguin)
- Anonymous, *The Female American* (Broadview, ed. Burnham)
- Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano* (Broadview, ed. Costanzo)

Critical and theoretical readings will include works by Benedict Anderson, John Armitage, Paul Gilroy, Lisa Lowe, Mary Baine Campbell, Barbara M. Stafford, Mary Louise Pratt, Susan Scott Parrish, Linda Colley, Jace Weaver, Mary Poovey, Christian Parenti, Ann Laura Stoler, Roxann Wheeler, Ian Baucom, Arjun Appadurai, and Wai Chee Dimock, among others. These readings, along with short selections by Daniel Defoe, Richard Steele, Robert Boyle, Samuel Hearne, Thomas Jefferson, Mary Rowlandson, Susannah Johnson, J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur, John Locke, Phillis Wheatley, Ann Yearsley, Anna Laetitia Barbauld, and William Wilberforce, will be posted on D2L.

Recommended: *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* (8th ed.)

Assignments and evaluation

<i>Assignment</i>	<i>Due date</i>	<i>Weight</i>
Critical reading summaries (2 x 300 words)	TBD (2x/term)	10%
Presentation: 18c life & literature (5 min.)	Jan. 18 (or Mar. 27)	5%
Worksheet: Anatomy of a transatlantic text (approx. 500 words)	Feb. 1	10%
Comparative analysis (1000-1250 words)	Mar. 1	20%
Presentation: Comparative analysis (7 min.)	Mar. 20	5%
Research project: Expanding the Atlantic world (1500-2000 words)	Apr. 5	30%
Presentation: Expanding the Atlantic world (7 min.)	Apr. 10	7%
Presentation: Contemporary Atlantics (5 min.)	Apr. 12	3%
Participation	Weekly	10%

Assignment details

Please note: Additional instructions and assessment details (rubrics) for each of the following assignments will be provided in class.

Critical Reading Summaries (10%)

Twice over the course of this term, you will be required to prepare a brief (300-word) summary of one of the critical or theoretical readings assigned for that week. Each of these responses should be written in plain language, and should clearly identify both the central claim of the article you've chosen and the stakes of the conversation its author hopes to enter. Your summary should also identify 3-4 key words for your article, and pose 1-2 interesting questions for discussion in class.

These responses must be submitted via D2L by 11:59 p.m. on the Wednesday before the class in which the assigned material will be addressed. On Thursday, I will bring hard copies of your summary to class for discussion, and after class, your summary will be posted to D2L for your classmates' future reference. Each response is worth 5% of your final grade.

Presentation: Eighteenth-Century Life and Literature (5%)

At the end of the second week of this course, you will be responsible for a brief (5-minute) presentation on one aspect of eighteenth-century life (e.g. politics and religion; money, commerce, and trade; scientific and technological change; urbanization and the public sphere; the growth of empire; or the British slave trade). This presentation should present a concise overview of the major trends and changes in this sphere of life over the course of the eighteenth century, with an emphasis on how these trends and changes are reflected in literature or literary form.

This presentation should be accompanied by a visual aid (e.g. a handout or a PowerPoint presentation), which will be posted to D2L for your classmates' future reference.

Research Project: Expanding the Atlantic World

You will complete your major research project for this class in three stages. *Please note:* You are welcome to select a new research subject at any point during this process. If you do, however, please note that you must submit worksheets anatomizing at least two of the primary texts that you treat in your final essay.

Worksheet: Anatomy of a Transatlantic Text (10%)

First, you will anatomize one of our course texts, taking account of its structure, parts, and preoccupations in as much detail as possible. Once you've completed your anatomy, you will be invited to compare the features you've identified to the formal innovations discussed during our 'Eighteenth-Century Life' presentations, and then reflect on whether the features you've observed appear to be conventional or unconventional for eighteenth-century literature. At the end of this worksheet, you will be invited to draft 2-3 questions for further research.

Comparative Analysis (20%) & Presentation (5%)

Next, you will select at least one other course text and write a 1000-1250-word essay comparing it to the text you used for your Anatomy worksheet. As always, this comparative essay should be focused on how reading these two texts together has helped to sharpen your understanding of at least one key feature of one (or both) of these texts. At the end of this essay, you should also reflect on how the results of your comparative analysis speak to the concerns of at least one of the critical readings assigned for this course.

In the week after you have received feedback on your comparative essay, you will also be responsible for sharing your findings with the class in a brief (7-minute) presentation. Together, these presentations will form course Showcase #1, after which we'll discuss what this preliminary work with our primary sources has taught us so far about the key features of transatlantic literature. Once again, this presentation should be accompanied by a visual aid (e.g. a handout or a PowerPoint presentation) that outlines your key points about each text. This visual aid will be posted on D2L for your classmates' future reference.

Research Paper: Expanding the Atlantic World (30%) & Presentation (7%)

After Showcase #1 (on the key features of transatlantic literature, as suggested by our comparative analyses), we'll devote one class to brainstorming a list of the perspectives and experiences not yet represented in the canon of transatlantic literature assigned for this course. As part of your final research project, you will be responsible for choosing one of these perspectives, and then using Eighteenth-Century Collections Online (or a similar database) to find a text that gives voice to it. Once you've found your text, you should repeat the process you've completed for each of the previous two assignments: you should conduct an anatomy of that text, compare it to one or both of the other texts you used for your Comparative Analysis, and then reflect on how your second comparative analysis – and the inclusion of this new voice – speaks to the concerns of at least one of the critical readings assigned for this course. At the end of term, you will present the results of this research in a 1500-2000-word essay.

In the second class of the week in which you submit your research paper, you will also be responsible for sharing your findings with the class in a brief (7-minute) presentation. Together, these presentations will form Showcase #2, after which we'll discuss how the inclusion of these additional voices has changed our understanding of the literary forms and central preoccupations of the eighteenth-century transatlantic world. Once again, this presentation should be accompanied by a visual aid (e.g. a handout or a PowerPoint presentation) that outlines your key points. This visual aid will be posted on D2L for your classmates' future reference.

Presentation: Contemporary Atlantics (3%)

In the last week of the term, you will be responsible for selecting a contemporary text of any genre and explaining to the class how you could use the strategies of transatlantic literary studies to read it. This presentation should be brief (no more than 5 minutes), and it can be speculative – but as always, it should be accompanied by a visual aid (e.g. a handout or a PowerPoint presentation) that outlines your key points.

Participation (10%)

This part of your grade will be assessed holistically. Evidence of active and substantial engagement in this course will include: regularly participating in in-class writing workshops; making comments that consistently demonstrate careful thought and creative analysis; listening actively and responding thoughtfully to your peers; contributing to cooperative argument-building by attempting to synthesize discussion and relate new readings to prior course material; being willing to take risks by identifying and advocating for new approaches to assigned readings; and arriving fully prepared with specific questions and ideas to share during each class. At midterm and end of term, you will have the opportunity to complete a participation self-assessment that I will use to inform your final grade. To make the most of our time together, please bring your books and critical readings with you to class.

Policies & Guidelines

Respectful Classroom Conduct

In order to create an atmosphere conducive to respectful conversation and the free exchange of ideas, please be considerate of your peers. We expect you to arrive on time and prepared for class, to keep from interrupting one another, and to give your full attention to our discussion. Rudeness, derogatory language, or personal attacks are not permitted. At mid-term, you will have an opportunity to complete an anonymous evaluation to register your feelings about the course – and you are always welcome to make an appointment to discuss any other concerns about the class during office hours.

Talking (and Writing) About Difficult Subjects

Some of the texts assigned for this course will ask you to think critically about the literary and scientific construction of race, and many of our in-class discussions will address the contemporary legacies of the diverse forms of structural oppression we'll find in our readings. If you find this work especially uncomfortable, or you would like to talk privately about how literary critics learn to engage with material that we find personally difficult to read, I hope that you will visit my office hours. In the meantime, please remember that each member of our course will bring different experiences with this material into the classroom – so let's approach each of our class discussions with patience and respect for one another, and do our best to take care of ourselves.

Electronic Devices in Class

You are welcome to take notes on a laptop, but please be mindful about your use of electronic devices in class. Checking social media sites, sending personal messages, and participating in other online activities unrelated to class distracts both you and the people around you – so unless the whole class has been asked to log on to D2L as part of a specific course activity, please use your laptop only for word processing or accessing our readings, and keep your cell phone stowed in your pocket or bag.

Office Hours & Email

All updates regarding readings or changes to the schedule will be posted on D2L. Whenever possible, however, I prefer to discuss course business in person during office hours, so I hope you will visit me during the twice weekly office hours that will take place just after our class meetings (Tues. and Thurs., 3:30-4:30 p.m.), or email me to set up an appointment. Also, at least one week before each major writing assignment is due, I will circulate a sign-up sheet for appointments during and outside of these regular office hours, and I am always happy to use these appointments to discuss your work in progress. You will be able to find me in room SS1106 (down the hallway to the left of the elevators).

If you have a brief question about course business that has not been addressed on the syllabus, you are also welcome to email me. Please use your University of Calgary email address and put the course code [ENGL525] in your subject heading to ensure a prompt reply. Note, however, that I do not check my email regularly after 7:00 p.m. or on weekends. For additional advice about professional communication, please refer to the resources posted on D2L.

Late Assignments

All assignments must be submitted via D2L as either a Word document (.doc) or PDF (.pdf) by or before 11:59 p.m. on the day that they are due.

For all written assignments, the late penalty is 2% per business day (up to a maximum of 5 business days, after which point the essay will receive a mark of 0). There are no extensions. In the case of serious illness, please email me as soon as possible to discuss an alternate submission date, and plan to submit a doctor's note along with your assignment. Late papers should also be submitted online as a PDF (.pdf).

Because all of your presentations will be completed in class, there is no late penalty; presentations completed as scheduled will be graded according to the criteria on the assignment sheet, and presentations not completed as scheduled will receive a mark of 0. In the case of serious illness, the usual policy applies: please email me as soon as possible to discuss an alternative presentation schedule, and plan to submit a doctor's note along with your visual aids. All visual aids should be submitted via D2L.

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, you must complete an Application of Deferment of Term Work form. For more information, refer to [the University Calendar site on the Deferral of Final Examinations. See Calendar.](#)

Academic regulations and schedules

Consult [the University Calendar](#) for course information, university and faculty regulations, dates, deadlines and schedules, student, faculty and university rights and responsibilities.

Grade appeals

Consult [the University Calendar site on the Reappraisal of Grades](#) 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."

Grading system

In this course, all essays, midterms, and exams will receive a numerical grade, which can be converted to the [University of Calgary's four-point Undergraduate Grading System](#) using the following scale:

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

Notes: 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. Also, although the A+ is solely an honorific that entails no additional points in the four-point system, I will use this mark to distinguish superlative work that exceeds expectations in style, correctness, intellectual depth and breadth, sophistication, and originality.

Students do not need to complete every assignment in order to pass this course.

Academic Integrity

Plagiarism, even where it is unintentional, is a serious academic offense. 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 [here](#).

Department of English Statement on Principles of Conduct

According to [the University Calendar](#), "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.

Student Support

Accessibility Services

If you have a disability or any other concern about your ability to fully participate in this class, please contact Student Accessibility Services at (403) 220-8237 or refer to [this website](#) for their hours and location. If you require accommodations related to your coursework based on a protected ground other than disability, the University [Student Accommodation Policy](#) requires you to communicate this need in writing. If you contact Student Accessibility Services using the information listed above, their counselors can help you process the request and issue letters of accommodation to your instructors.

Academic and Personal Counseling

University can be a stressful time. If you are experiencing difficulty adjusting to university life, coping with anxiety or depression, or just want help developing good time- and stress- management skills, please contact [the Wellness Centre](#) to set up an appointment. Alternatively, you can work on your note-taking, essay writing, and exam preparation skills at [the Student Success Centre](#).

Faculty of Arts Program Advising and Student Information Resources

For program planning and advice, contact the Student Success Centre at (403) 220-5881 or visit them 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. You can also visit [the Faculty of Arts website](#) for more detailed information on common academic concerns. You can reach the Student Ombudsman's Office [here](#).

Writing Centres

Learning to write well is an important part of this course, and I hope to provide you with plenty of support in this effort. If you feel like you would benefit from additional support, however, please consult [the Writing Support section](#) of the Student Success Centre website for a list of online and workshop writing supports for University of Calgary students.

Library and Research Support

You can find the English library and research guide [here](#). Melanie Boyd, Librarian for English, offers research support to students, including strategies for finding articles, books, and other library materials. You can contact her at maboyn@ucalgary.ca.

English Department Website

For more information about courses, programs, policies, events and contacts in the Department of English, please visit the department's [website](#). Please note that the course outlines posted on the English Department website constitute the official course outline for purposes of appeals, so you 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. You can also follow the Department of English on [Facebook](#) & [Twitter](#).

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. SMRWC also strives 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. You can contact SMRWC at smecuofc@gmail.com.

Contact for Students Union Representatives for the Faculty of Arts

arts1@su.ucalgary.ca, arts2@su.ucalgary.ca, arts3@su.ucalgary.ca, arts4@su.ucalgary.ca

Emergency Evacuation/Assembly Points

In the event of an emergency during our class, please assemble at one of the locations identified [here](#). The Social Science – Food Court is the Assembly Point closest to our classroom.

“Safewalk” Program

Day or night, you can contact [Campus Security](#) at (403) 220-5333 for assistance or an escort through the “Safewalk” Program. Use any campus phone, emergency phone or the yellow phone located at most parking lot pay booths.

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act

As a publicly funded institution, the University of Calgary is under the jurisdiction of the provincial *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy* (FOIP) Act in all aspects of its operations as a publicly funded institution. For more information, please contact [the Legal Services office](#).