

FACULTY OF ARTS  
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH  
COURSE OUTLINE

English 607.62-01

Fall 2014

**Courage of Truth: Speaking to the World from Other Perspectives**

Instructor: Dr. Shaobo Xie  
Class time: Friday 1:00-3:45 p.m.  
Location: SS 1015  
Office: SS 1012  
Office hours: Wednesday 11:30-12:30 and by appointment  
Telephone: 220-5478  
Email: [sxie@ucalgary.ca](mailto:sxie@ucalgary.ca)

**Course Description**

This course explores Foucault's discourse on *parrhēsia* (free-spokenness or truth-telling) through the lens of works by Giorgio Agamben, Alain Badiou, Judith Butler, David Harvey, Emmanuel Levinas, Jacques Rancière, and Slavoj Žižek. In *The Courage of Truth* Foucault defines the *parrhēsiast* (truth-speaker) as "the unlimited, permanent, unbearable questioner," someone who takes truth-speaking as his/her uncompromised "duty, obligation, and responsibility," although it may involve a risk concerning his/her relationship with the person or society to which the truth is presented. In Foucault's view, truth as such "can never be the same; there can be truth only in the form of the other world and the other life." That is, to speak truth in the Platonic or Cynic manner is to open up an other perspective on the present world, to imagine an alternative world from that other perspective. In this course, students will make a systematic inquiry into Foucault's notion of *parrhēsia* as developed in the two volumes of his lectures delivered at Collège de France from 1982-1983 and from 1983-1984. The seminar readings and discussions will be structured along the following questions: In what senses do the theorists and critics read on the course measure up to Foucault's definition of *parrhēsiast*? What other perspectives on the world and what other ways of being human do they open up in their writings? How does the Foucauldian *parrhēsiast* or *parrhēsia* contribute to renewing our notion of the role of literature and criticism, as well as broadening our horizon of critical thinking?

**Critical texts**

Giorgio Agamben, *State of Exception*  
Alain Badiou, *The Century*  
Badiou and Slavoj Žižek, *Philosophy in the Present*  
Judith Butler, *Precarious Life*  
David Harvey, *Spaces of Global Capitalism*  
Michel Foucault, *The Government of Self and Others*

Foucault, *The Courage of Truth: The Government of Self and Others II*  
 Emmanuel Levinas, *Entre Nous: Thinking-of-the-Other*  
 Jacques Rancière, *Dissensus: On Politics and Aesthetics*

**Assignments**

Review essay	25%
Seminar presentation (Written version due one week after presentation)	25%
Critical essay	40%
Participation	10%

Each student will make a seminar presentation. The written assignments will be a review essay of 1500 words and a research paper of 5000 words.

There is no Registrar-scheduled exam in this course.

**Grading system:**

Grades are calculated according to the 4 point scale used in the *Graduate Calendar*:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/grad/current/gs-e-1.html>

Grade	Grade Point Value	Graduate Description
A+	4.00	Outstanding
A	4.00	Excellent-superior performance showing comprehensive understanding of the subject matter
A-	3.70	Very good performance
B+	3.30	Good performance
B	3.00	Satisfactory performance
B-	2.70	Minimum pass for students in Faculty of Graduate Studies
C+	2.30	All grades below B- are indicative of failure at the graduate level and cannot be counted towards Faculty of Graduate Studies course requirements.
C	2.00	
C-	1.70	
D+	1.30	
D	1.00	
F	0.00	

Please note: A B- is considered a minimum pass for students in the Faculty of Graduate Studies.

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.

**Plagiarism:**

Using any source whatsoever without clearly documenting it is a serious academic offense. Consequences include failure on the assignment, failure in the course and possible suspension or expulsion from the university. Please refer to the following information and make sure you are familiar with the statement below on plagiarism. <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k-2-1.html>

**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: <http://libguides.ucalgary.ca/english>

**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 <http://english.ucalgary.ca/node/245>. 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. Aruna Srivastava, 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 Deferment of Term Work form must be completed. The University also has regulations governing the deferral of final examinations. See Calendar:  
<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-6.html>,  
<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-7.html>.

**Academic Accommodation:**

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

**Emergency Evacuation/Assembly Points:**

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

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

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/legalservices/foip/>

**“Safewalk” Program:**

Campus Security will escort individuals day or night: call 220-5333 for assistance. Use any campus phone, emergency phone or the yellow phone located at most parking lot pay booths. <http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/safewalk/>

**Contact for the Graduate Student Association:** <http://gsa.ucalgary.ca/>

**Contact for Students Ombudsman’s Office:**

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds>

## **PLAGIARISM**

Plagiarism is an extremely serious offence. Please read the following information carefully. The penalty routinely recommended by the English Department for documented plagiarism is failure of the course in which the offence occurred; academic probation is also routinely applied at the Faculty level. Suspension or expulsion can result from severe or repeated plagiarism.

The University Calendar states:

1. Plagiarism - Essentially plagiarism involves submitting or presenting work in a course as if it were the student's own work done expressly for that particular course when, in fact, it is not. Most commonly plagiarism exists when:

- (a) the work submitted or presented was done, in whole or in part, by an individual other than the one submitting or presenting the work (this includes having another impersonate the student or otherwise substituting the work of another for one's own in an examination or test),
- (b) parts of the work are taken from another source without reference to the original author,
- (c) the whole work (e.g., an essay) is copied from another source, and/or,
- (d) a student submits or presents work in one course which has also been submitted in another course (although it may be completely original with that student) without the knowledge of or prior agreement of the instructor involved.

While it is recognized that scholarly work often involves reference to the ideas, data and conclusions of other scholars, intellectual honesty requires that such references be explicitly and clearly noted.

Plagiarism occurs when direct quotations are taken from a source without specific acknowledgement, or when original ideas or data from the source are not acknowledged. Citing your sources in a bibliography is not enough, because a bibliography does not establish which parts of a student's work are taken from other sources. MLA (Modern Language Association) documentation or other recognized forms of citation must be used for this purpose. Advice on adequate documentation can be found at the following web sites:

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

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

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

According to the University Calendar, (<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/j.html>) "The University of Calgary community has undertaken to be guided by the following statements of purpose and values: to promote free inquiry and debate, to act as a community of scholars, ..., to respect, appreciate, and encourage diversity, [and] to display care and concern for community". The Department of English, like the university as a whole, is committed to a "positive and productive learning and working environment." This environment is characterized by appreciation and encouragement of diversity and respect for the dignity of all persons: students, support staff, and faculty. The department will not tolerate unacceptable behaviour, such as threatening gestures, threatening or abusive verbal or written communication (including e-mails), or any conduct that "seriously disrupts the lawful education and related activities of students and/or university staff". Any cases of such misconduct should be reported immediately to the department Head, who, depending on the nature and severity of the incident, may then take further appropriate action.