

**FACULTY OF ARTS
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH**

ENGLISH 676 A/B-01

Fall and Winter, 2012-2013

COURSE TITLE: Historical Explorations within the Contemporary Canadian Novel

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Office hours: Wednesdays, 15:00 - 16:00
 Thursdays, 15:30 – 16:30
 (or by appointment)

Course description:

The Canadian “historical novel” has proceeded from a moment of narrative transparency to a position that questions its own reading of history’s wounds, denouncing the texture of received information and yet imagining a narrative order. Can such referential restraints provide a space within which the assumptions of particular social, cultural, and historical moments be examined and critiqued? Is this focus nostalgic or revisionist? Canadian historiography appears to be interested in examining subversive or unheroic characters that nevertheless occupy a time and space emblematic of “national character.” At the same time, historiographic representations of landscape, gender, class, region and religion encompass economic, social, and cultural contingencies, all relevant to the development of a literature within a nation diverse and dispersed in terms of cultural coherence. This course will apprehend these questions by reading a selection of contemporary Canadian novels that look to history or to a particular historical moment as their initiating impulse.

TEXTS:

Margaret Atwood, *Alias Grace*
Joseph Boyden, *Three Day Road*
George Elliott Clarke, *George and Rue*
Timothy Findley, *Famous Last Words*
Elizabeth Hay, *A Student of Weather*
Lawrence Hill, *Book of Negroes*
Wayne Johnston, *The Colony of Unrequited Dreams*
Joy Kogawa, *Obasan*
Robert Kroetsch, *Man from the Creeks*
Robert Kroetsch, *The Words of My Roaring*
Fred Wah, *Diamond Grill*
Sky Lee, *Disappearing Moon Cafe*
Daphne Marlatt, *Ana Historic*
Michael Ondaatje, *In the Skin of a Lion*
Fred Stenson, *The Trade*
Joan Thomas, *Curiosity*

Jane Urquhart, *The Whirlpool*
Guy Vanderhaeghe, *The Last Crossing*
Thomas Wharton, *Icefields*

Further Reading:

John H. Arnold, *History: A Very Short Introduction*
Andrea Cabajsky and Brett Josef Grubisic, ed. *National Plots: Historical Fiction and Changing Ideas of Canada*.
Benedetto Croce, trans. Douglas Ainslie, *Theory & History of Historiography*
Frank Davey, *From There to Here*
Northrop Frye, *The Bush Garden*
Linda Hutcheon, *The Canadian Postmodern*
Linda Hutcheon, *The Poetics of Postmodernism*
Jon Kertzer, *Worrying the Nation: Imagining a National literature in English Canada*
Dominic La Capra, *History and Criticism*
Georg Lukács, *The Historical Novel*
James T. Shotwell, *The History of History*
H. Aram Veaser, ed. *The New Historicism*
Hayden White, *The Content of the Form: Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation*
Herb Wyile, *Speaking in the Past Tense: Canadian Novelists on Writing Historical Fiction*
Herb Wyile, *Speculative Fictions: Contemporary Canadian Novelists and the Writing of History*

Assignments and Evaluation:

1. In-Class Presentation (2, one in each term, 10% each):	20%
2. Short Paper #1 (1000 words):	10%
3. Medium Length #2 (2000 words) research paper:	20%
4. Long #3 (4000 words) research paper:	30%
5. Class participation (see below):	10%
6. Weekly contributions to Critical Bibliography (see below):	10%
	100%

A student MUST complete ALL of the above assignments in order to pass this course. There is NO group work in this class. There is NO final examination in this course.

1. In-Class Presentations and subsequent documentation of presentation:

Each student is required to make 2 short (**approximately 20 minutes**) critical presentations on the material we are studying in the course, addressing a specific aspect of historical declension. This oral but well-researched presentation should be primarily based on textual analysis and relevant background critique. The class will engage the presenter in discussion. Then, taking class feedback and discussion into account, the student will revise and hand in to me a written version of the presentation. This work together falls under In-Class Presentation.

2. Short Paper (1000 words):

Each student (by the indicated date on the assignment to be) will hand in a short (1000 word) analytical essay. Topics will be handed out early in the course.

3. Medium Length research paper (2000 words):

Your medium length research paper (the length of a 20 minute academic conference paper) will undertake to examine a specific aspect of historicity in one of the Canadian novels on this course. Suggestive topics will be provided; from them you can derive your own thesis and conduct research toward this paper.

4. Long research paper (4000 words):

Your long research paper (publishable length) must demonstrate a fairly sophisticated employment of theory. You will be asked to choose one aspect of historicity and historical narrative and to discuss its configuration with relation to a theoretical question. I will hand out essay questions, but students will be free to derive their own, providing they clear their topics with me. Students are free to work on a text that is not covered in the class, but must also clear that text with me.

5. Bibliography Contributions:

You will be reading a good deal of criticism and theory as background for this class. Students are required bring to **EVERY** class (and to e-mail or post on Blackboard) a secondary reference relevant to the Canadian historical novel, and must offer to the class a brief description and evaluation of this reference. This can be a theoretical work, or a published paper on a particular author or text. This will enable us to build together a comprehensive bibliography, one that you will be able to utilize in your future research.

6. Class Participation:

Students will be evaluated on the basis of their contributions to the discussion of the works this course is set to examine; the expectation is that students will contribute to in-class analysis and argument. Participation should be knowledgeable, referential, and relatively sophisticated in terms of its awareness of theory and criticism. Students are expected to read the materials in advance and to come to class prepared to discuss the work in an intelligent and intellectual manner. A further expectation is that students will be prepared to address the subject at hand without resorting to jejune vocabulary, especially such catch phrases as “thing,” “like,” and “you know.” A reasonable level of eloquence is expected as part of the practice of the course.

Grading System

The following grading system will be used in this course. You will receive a letter grade on all assignments. I grade you as graduate students, and expect you to produce graduate level work.

University of Calgary’s 4 point system:

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)

Exceptional work may be granted an A+, which, although it still records as a 4.0, is a marker of extraordinary performance.

I do not generally round grades up or down, unless a student is right on the margin of a grade. If that is the case, class participation is often the deciding factor.

Please use MLA style to format your papers.

Late assignment policy: Assignments submitted after the prescribed deadline will drop a grade per week. Thus, a B+ paper that is two weeks late will drop to a B-. *Please make every effort to bring assignments directly to me. If it is not possible to do so, take your assignment to SS 1152 and put it in the dropbox. Your assignment will be date-stamped and placed in the instructor's mailbox.*

Policy about electronic devices: No cell phones during class. Please bring your laptop or tablet computer to class. We will often conduct searches together.

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>.

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>

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 Barbara Howe at 403 220 5484 or visit her in Social Sciences Tower 1148 in the first instance.

For program planning and advice, contact Barbara Howe at howe@ucalgary.ca to make an appointment with Dr. Jacqueline Jenkins, Graduate Program Director.

Guidelines on e-mail Etiquette:

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/it/help/articles/email/etiquette>

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 a student’s responsibility to request academic accommodation. If you are a student with a disability who may require academic accommodation and if you have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre, please contact their office at 220-8237. Your academic accommodation letters should be provided to your instructor no later than fourteen (14) days after the commencement of this course. Students who have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre are not eligible for formal academic accommodation.

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/drc/>

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.