

This syllabus has been provided as a reference tool for students considering this course. It has been modified to follow Senate regulations. Current students enrolled in any undergraduate course must obtain the most recent syllabus from their course instructor or from their course website. This is not the latest version.



## Department of English & Writing Studies

### **Contemporary Canadian Literature English 2060E (001) Fall/Winter 2013-14**

**Instructor:** Dr. Michelle Hartley

**Date/Time:** Monday 11:30am-1:30pm,  
Wednesday 11:30am-12:30pm

**Location:** University College 123

#### Course Description

WELCOME to Contemporary Canadian Literature. As the course calendar states. This course provides an introduction to contemporary Canadian writing in both established and experimental forms. The focus of the course will be on recurrent themes, images, and writing strategies in Canadian writing from 1970 to the present, and on their relationship to both Canadian literary traditions and international currents of thought. This particular incarnation of the course focuses on writing published after the passing of the Multiculturalism Act (1988), recent work. You should come away from this course with an enriched understanding of the variety of texts written for and by Canadians, most of which are not overtly nationalistic, but the variety of critical responses to them should give you a broader understanding of how literature, culture, and we as individuals connect and in turn comprise part of the Canadian nation. In its interest in a multicultural and inclusive Canada, the course will examine works from many genres including more popular genres such as Young Adult fiction and speculative fiction.

#### **Objectives:**

Successful students who complete the course will be better able to:

- Distinguish between the primary characteristics of poetry and prose;
- Recognize and understand the features of genres such as short stories, lyric poetry, gothic fiction, speculative fiction, and postmodern historical fictions;
- Analyze texts employing the skills of literary analysis, considering features such as narrative technique, symbolism, imagery, etc.;
- Understand some of the political and philosophical underpinnings of the works on the course;
- Communicate ideas effectively in writing (through discussion, presentation and persuasive essays);
- Develop a specific, focused argument and support it with textual evidence from both primary and secondary sources.

Course Materials

Daphne Marlatt, *Ana Historic*  
 Wayson Choy, *The Jade Peony*  
 Eden Robinson, *Monkey Beach*  
 Shyam Selvadurai, *Funny Boy*  
 Miriam Toews, *a complicated kindness*  
 Dionne Brand, *What We All Long For*  
 Nancy Lee, *Dead Girls*  
 William Gibson, *The Difference Engine*  
 Kelley Armstrong, *The Gathering*

Methods of Evaluation

Learning Cell	10%	Due October 21	750 words
Essay 1	15%	Due November 25/ Dec 4	1500 words
Presentation	10%	Due February 10	750 words
Essay 2	20%	Due March 17	2000 words
Participation	10%		
Exam	35%	TBA	3 hours

A student must receive a passing grade for both term work and the final examination in order to receive a passing grade for the course. This applies to all courses in all programs offered by the department. Students whose term and final exam grades average 50% or above, even though one of the two is a failure, shall receive a default grade of 48%. **Please note:** The department of English & Writing Studies does not release final grades. All undergraduate grade reports will be available online from the Office of the Registrar.

Students are fully responsible for looking at and being familiar with the information posted on the department website at <http://www.uwo.ca/english/undergraduate/info%20for%20students.html#grade>.

**Timetable:**

Sept. 9-11	Introduction to course and subject: Canadian writing and the multiculturalism act
Sept 16-18	Examining History: Alice Munro, "Meneseung"
Sept 23-25	Daphne Marlatt, <i>Ana Historic</i>
Sept 30-Oct 2	Wayde Compton, "Where Heaven Lies" declaration of the half-frican nation"
Oct 7-9	Wayson Choy, <i>The Jade Peony</i>
Oct 16	Happy Thanksgiving Monday - No class Choy, cont'd
Oct 21-23	Essay writing: Learning Cells and presentations
Oct 28-30	A Native Issue?: Appropriation debate and Armstrong essay Nourbese Philip: Where did out of Africa debate go?
Nov 4-6	Philip, "Discourse"; Marilyn Dumont, poems
Nov 11- 13	Thomas King, "Borders" and "The One about Coyote Going West"
Nov 18-20	Eden Robinson, <i>Monkey Beach</i>
Nov 25-27	Robinson, cont'd - <b>Essay 1 due</b>
Dec 2-4	sound poetry bp nichol/Christian Bok/lillian allen - <b>Essay 1 final deadline</b>
Jan 6-8	Adolescent Narrators: Coming of Age Shyam Selvadurai, <i>Funny Boy</i>
Jan 13-15	Shane Rhodes poems (OWL)

Jan 20-22	Miriam Toews, a complicated kindness
Jan 27-29	Dionne Brand, What We All Long For
Feb 3-5	Brand, cont'd Eliza Robertson, "We Walked on Water" (OWL)
Feb 10-12	Short Story/Poem presentations - <b>All due Feb. 10</b>
Feb 24-26	Nancy Lee, Dead Girls
March 3-5	William Gibson, The Difference Engine
March 10- 12	Gibson, cont'd
March 17-19	Nalo Hopkinson, "A Habit of Waste" etc. - <b>Essay 2 due</b>
March 24-29	Kelley Armstrong, The Gathering
March 31- April 2	TBA
April 7	Catch up and review

**Essay Basics:**

**Formal features:** Essays should be written according to the standard essay style: typed, double-spaced, 12 point Times New Roman font, on white 8.5" paper with 1" margins. You should include your name, the course number, my name, and the date on the top left-hand corner of the first page, which is not a title page but the first page of your paper itself. Your title should follow centred on the page. Pages should be attached by a paperclip or staple; please avoid binders, plastic report covers, etc. This format is also necessary for your short paper and presentation notes.

PAPERS MUST BE UPLOADED TO OWL BEFORE BEING SUBMITTED TO ME AS A PAPER COPY.

**Grading Criteria:** Originality of argument, the ability to support the argument with reference to the primary text in the form of quotations; rhetorical persuasiveness; syntax, grammar, spelling, which are mechanics; and accurate MLA bibliographic citation will all be factors in the grading of the essay.

**Citations:** All bibliographic notation should use the MLA method of parenthetical notation and a Works Cited page. Please see the sheet "Citing Authorities in an English Essay" (available from the UWO English Department's website), consult a standard style guide such as the MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, or the OWL at Purdue website. See below for information on plagiarism.

**Assignments:**

Assignments should be submitted using the above formal features whether they are response papers, presentations or essays.

**Late assignments** WILL BE ACCEPTED BUT WILL BE PENALIZED 2% PER DAY, INCLUDING WEEKENDS. All assignments must be submitted to me in person and uploaded to OWL. When there is a question about the submission date, I will take the OWL date. Essays may not be faxed, emailed, or slipped under my door. Papers handed in after 10 days or after the assignment is returned will not normally be accepted. Keep a copy of all assignments until after the submission of final grades. In addition to receiving late penalties, late papers will also receive minimal if any comments and be returned at my leisure.

### **Learning Cell**

A learning cell is an assignment in which students get to develop their close reading and interpretive skills while benefiting from the insights of other students. With the exception of dictionaries and encyclopedias, basic reference material, do not use any secondary sources for this assignment.

For this assignment you will be assigned two short texts to analyze. You will prepare, in advance, two questions that you believe are central to an understanding of the texts' themes, imagery, or style. For one of these texts, you will provide a 2-3 paragraph answer. For the other, you will provide an outlined answer. The paragraph answer should succinctly demonstrate one or two key points about the significance of the literary device in its context within the prose poem. This assignment is essentially a short analytical argument in one or two paragraphs. This is a chance for you to 1) exercise your skills at constructing paragraphs; 2) demonstrate coherent, focused analysis; and 3) prepare for using these skills in longer essays.

### **Second Term Presentations**

In this assignment students will stretch their critical faculties and the boundaries of the course. You will find a Canadian work published in the last five years by a writer born after 1972 or by a first-time writer. Summarize the work and its merits, read a passage you find representative of the work as a whole, and argue why it should be on the course. The three students who argue most convincingly will help decide the course's final text.

### **Attendance:**

Attendance will be taken every class, although your participation depends primarily on your preparedness and willingness to join class discussion. I will expect you to come with questions, and I may occasionally collect these questions as part of the participation mark. This is an advantage to those students who have trouble voicing opinions and questions in class. Such students may participate by offering an alternative participation via putting up questions/images/research on OWL, but students should speak to me in the first weeks of classes

### Accommodation

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth 10% or more of their final grade must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department. Documentation shall be submitted, as soon as possible, to the Office of the Dean of the student's Faculty of registration, together with a request for relief specifying the nature of the accommodation being requested. The UWO Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness and further information regarding this policy can be found at [http://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/accommodation\\_medical.pdf](http://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf).

### **Downloadable Student Medical Certificate (SMC):**

[http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf)

### Academic Offences

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at [http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/scholastic\\_discipline\\_undergrad.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf)

### **Plagiarism:**

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea or passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence.

### **Plagiarism Checking:**

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com <http://www.turnitin.com>.

### Support Services

Registrarial Services <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>

Student Support Services <https://student.uwo.ca/psp/heprdweb/?cmd=login>

Services provided by the USC <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

Student Development Centre <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to MentalHealth@Western: <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.