

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

National and Global Perspectives on Cultural Studies **English 2260F (001)** Fall 2013

Instructor: Dr. Michael Sloane

Date/Time: Monday 1:30pm-3:30pm
Wednesday 1:30pm-2:30pm

Location: Physics & Astronomy Building 117

Prerequisites

At least 60% in 1.0 of English 1020E or 1022E or 1024E or 1035E or 1036E or both English 1027F/G and 1028F/G, or permission of the Department.

Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Course Description

This course sets out to read and understand the world in a weird way. "All of culture and all of nature get churned up again every day," writes Bruno Latour. And so seemingly clear-cut categories like science, politics, environment, economy, nationality, law, religion, technology, and fiction are, in fact, complexly connected. The "World Wide Web" refers to something other than just the Internet—namely, reality. This course's mode of operation is to survey and scrutinize the ways in which both natural and cultural phenomena are entangled by paying attention to national, international, and environmental relations through critical theory, postcolonialism, and ecocriticism.

Specifically, this course turns to novels, poems, films, comix, and events to think through topics like place, poverty, class, race, trash, slums, animals, food, oil, global warming, disease, viruses, disaster, memes, tourism, terraforming, biopolitics, power, bioterrorism, nation, imperialism, technology, the virtual, toxicity, identity, pollution, violence, and the apocalypse. From Google X's Wi-Fi air balloons flying above impoverished countries to Everyday Carry (EDC) kits attempting to anticipate the unexpected, this course takes the time to slowly think through the implications of artifacts and activities that reveal the messy ways in which natures and nations mix.

Objectives:

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

- Discuss in detail the Operations of both post colonialism and ecocriticism and how they intersect;
- Think analytically about the relationship between nation and nature in the context of cultural studies;
- Understand and apply a number of theoretical tools to a wide array of mediums like prose, poetry, film, and media;
- Employ critical skills for the formulation of well-organized, logical arguments with appropriate supporting evidence by way of close analysis; and
- Use critical theory to micro- and macroscopically scrutinize local and global cultures with an acute awareness of ethical, social, environmental, and political registers.

Course Materials

Required Texts:

Abani, Chris. *GraceLand*. Novel.

Coetzee, J.M. *Disgrace*. Novel.

Garrard, Greg. *Ecocriticism*. Second Edition. Textbook.

Kincaid, Jamaica. *A Small Place*. Novella/Essay.

McLeod, John. *Beginning Postcolonialism: Second Edition*. Textbook.

Vaughan, Brian K. and Niko Henrichson. *Pride of Baghdad*. Graphic Novel.

Wong, Rita. *Forage*. Poems. (Selections) (N.B. Selections will be made available on OWL)

Films:

Wall-E. Dir. Andrew Stanton. Walt Disney Studios Motions Pictures, 2008.

District 9. Dir. Neill Blomkamp. TriStar Pictures, 2009.

Contagion. Dir. Steven Soderberg. Warner Bros. Pictures, 2011.

Methods of Evaluation

Attendance & Participation	10%	Cumulative*	
Short Analysis	15%	Week 4 (Oct 2)	750- 1000 words
Midterm	15%	Week 6 (Oct 16)	50 minutes
Abstract	5%	Week 9 (Nov 4)	100 words
Essay	25%	Week 13 (Dev 4)	2000- 25000 words
Final Exam	30%	TBA**	3 hours

*In addition to classroom participation, you need to post a total of 5 responses to the weeks readings on OWL (see **Attendance and Participation**)

** The final exam will take place in the exam period (Dec 8-19); you will be notified when the Registrar schedules the date.

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:

*This syllabus' schedule, assignment weighting, and procedures are subject to change if any unexpected issues arise. (** E = Ecocriticism; BP = Beginning Postcolonialism)

Week 1	Introduction to Postcolonialism and Ecocriticism
Week 2	Place, Nation, World, and Tourism <i>A Small Place</i> , E 18-36, BP 44-61**
Week 3	Apartheid, Science Fiction, and Slums <i>District 9</i> , E 37- 44; 54-65, BP 80-101
Week 4	“How could a place be so ugly and violent, yet beautiful at the same time” <i>Graceland</i> Due: Short Analysis (Oct. 2)
Week 5	Eating at the Trasheteria <i>Wall- E</i> , E 117-122, BP 217-224
Week 6	Midterm (Oct. 16)
Week 7	The End of the World E 93-116, BP 122-152
Week 8	Biopolitics and Food <i>Forage</i> (selections), E 66-79
Week 9	HumAnimals <i>Disgrace</i> Due: Abstract (Nov. 4)
Week 10	Animal Comix <i>Pride of Baghdad</i> , E 146- 180
Week 11	The Viral E 181- 205, BP 162- 169
Week 12	Contemporary Crises BP 197-206

Week 13

Slow Violence; Review

BP 234- 268

Due: Essay (Dec. 4)

Assignments:

Short Analysis: The short analysis is worth 15% of your mark; it is 3-4 pages long or 750-1000 words and it is due during week 4 (Oct. 2). This assignment requires you to select a passage from one text (or a scene from one film) and offer a close reading of it. You can pick any text you want from the syllabus regardless of whether or not we have discussed it in class. An ideal close reading quotes the text (or makes reference to filmic tools) to highlight significant literary or analytical devices in order to communicate an interpretation and to connect it not only to the work as a whole, but also to the course's themes. The purpose of the short analysis is to exercise your critical skills in preparation for the essay.

Midterm: The midterm is worth 15% of your mark; it takes place in class on week 6 (Oct. 16). Your midterm will be comprised of multiple-choice questions testing your reading comprehension and a short essay.

Abstract: The abstract is worth 5% of your mark; it must be 100 words and it is due during week 9 (Nov. 4). An abstract is an informative summary of your essay's topic and argument. For our purposes, this abstract is a fiction. Typically, abstracts are composed after the paper or article is complete. This will not be the case here. Rather, the purpose of composing an abstract is to help you narrow down what you want to write on for the essay. Topics and arguments change; this is completely fine (you are not contractually obliged to follow-up on your abstract to a tee by any means). That being said, coming up with an abstract that you more or less abide by will help you in the long run.

Essay: The essay is worth 25% of your mark; it will be 8-10 pages long (2000-2500 words) and it is due during week 12 (Dec. 4). In this assignment you will engage 2 texts (fiction, film, events*) from the syllabus; construct a convincing argument; use ideas and concepts related to post colonialism and ecocriticism; employ a number of close readings to prove your argument; compose a well-structured and stylized essay; and draw upon 2-3 secondary sources.

An ideal essay will accomplish all of the above with little to no errors, logical, grammatical, or otherwise. You can pick any texts you want from the syllabus. The purpose of this paper is to give you the opportunity to exercise a form of critical engagement with scholarship in order to ultimately argue and execute your original interpretation of a number of texts. (* Please consult me if you have a different event in mind.)

Note: Please avoid recycling texts. There is a chance that you will write on one text more than once because of the 5 WebCT posts, which is fine; however, the texts you select for the short analysis and the essay cannot overlap.

Final Exam: Information about the makeup or contents of the final exam will be made available to you no later than the 15th of November; the final exam is worth 30% of your final mark (see "Final Grades" below for an important qualification).

Electronic Submission of Assignments: Both the short analysis and the essay are to be electronically submitted via OWL's Essay Drop Box (.doc or .rtf files). Once marked, both

assignments will be uploaded and returned with comments. Please read the comments. Feedback is crucial for developing your writing and critical skills. My positive and constructive criticism includes an attention to argumentation, method, logic, structure, exemplification, grammar, and style.

Late Policy: Papers submitted after the due date will receive a penalty of 2% per day late, including weekends. If you need an extension, then please email me 48 hours in advance of the assignment's due date. Extensions may be granted for assignments depending on the seriousness of your case. If you have a medical or personal emergency, then email me as soon as possible and we will negotiate an alternative due date (otherwise, please abide by the policy for academic accommodations [see below]).

Attendance:

If you want to successfully complete this course, then come to class. I will take attendance. Listening to lecture, taking notes, reading texts, asking questions, observing and engaging in discussion-these activities will enhance your learning experience.

In addition to classroom participation, you will be required to post a question, comment, or response to the week's readings on OWL. An ideal post is critical, analytical, refers to a scene or passage, and is a minimum of 50-100 words long. At the very least, you will discuss what you found interesting and why. You need to compose a total of 5 posts; posts taking up a text or topic for a particular week are due at the end of that week. (Le. Include in the subject line what week your post refers to. Posts posted after each Friday at 11:59 pm. will not be accepted. You can start posting as early as week 2; remember that there are only 12 weeks (there are no readings for the first week), so the sooner, the better.

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.

Downloadable Student Medical Certificate (SMC):

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

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.