

Department of English & Writing Studies

English 3572F (001)

Canadian Literature and Multiculturalism

Fall 2023

(may be subject to small changes prior to September 2023)

NEW text added to Required Readings

Prerequisites: At least 60% in 1.0 of English 1020-1999 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

Brief calendar description:

This course explores Canadian literature in relation to "multiculturalism," one of Canada's most celebrated and contested national attributes. Readings may include works published before and/or after the passing of the Official Multiculturalism Act in 1982, as well as critical debates about the term "multiculturalism" itself.

Description for Fall 2023:

Multiculturalism officially became part of Canada's state apparatus and national identity with the entry of multiculturalism into the Constitution in 1982 and the passing of the Official Multiculturalism Act in 1988. Multiple cultures, however, have always been part of the making of "Canada." We will examine representations of multiculturalism before and after its official designation as Canada's national identity, through detailed analysis of primary texts and study of critical debates about multiculturalism in secondary texts.

As a nation-state, Canada has been developed through successive phases of immigration and settlement of peoples from other countries, especially following the British North America Act of 1867 in tandem with the colonization and displacement of Indigenous peoples. Dominated by the French and British in early exploration and the colonial development of mercantile capitalism, Canada's demographics changed significantly in the second half of the nineteenth century with the expansion of settlement into "the West," the rise of industrial capitalism, and government's intentional preferences for economic and political migrants from Northern and Eastern Europe in particular. The early through mid-twentieth century saw migrants from war-torn Europe, including from the northern shores of the Mediterranean, who contributed significantly to the growth of urban Canada. When immigration policy became significantly more open in the second half of the twentieth century, the nation's demographics and collective heritages changed significantly again, particularly with immigrants "of colour" (although racialized minorities in Canada's demography existed before these more open policies, from at least as early as the immigration of Black Loyalists from the American War of Independence in the eighteenth century and the import of Asian labourers for building the Canadian Pacific Railway).

In other words, multiple cultures have always been core to the growth and development of Canada, even though “multiculturalism” (as an official policy and term) tends to be associated with Canadian identity in the later twentieth and early twenty-first centuries.

In this particular iteration of the course, we will consider continuities and discontinuities between “multiple cultures” and “multiculturalism,” between official and unofficial multiculturalism, and between “ethnicity,” “race,” and “diversity.” We will study a range of texts, in poetry and prose (fiction, non-fiction, excerpts, and full novels) from early in the twentieth century through to the twenty-first. The required reading is necessarily limited by the .50 credit term of study and (thus) by the representation of only some of the many “heritage” and “new-comer” groups that constitute Canada. Despite this limitation, the concepts, phenomena, and relations to be studied will be “good to think with” for texts beyond this course, for understanding (some of) the history of Canada as represented and refracted in its literature and policies, and for thinking about some of the antecedents of today’s “globalization” and “global” and “diasporic” literatures.

Teaching and learning will occur in class primarily through mini-lectures, discussion-based inquiry, and discussion-based knowledge sharing. Students are also encouraged to avail themselves of office hours for further learning opportunities.

An OWL course site will be used for the management of course materials, submission and return of assignments (unless otherwise noted), and communication (outside of class time) with the class as a whole during the term.

Objectives:

By the end of the course, successful students will be able to demonstrate the following learning outcomes (derived from the learning outcomes for third-year study in the English program at https://www.uwo.ca/english/english_studies/courses/english_learning_outcomes.html - threethousand):

Analytic Skills:

- an advanced ability to analyze a text’s rhetoric and form and to employ that analysis in a broader argument
- a developing ability to analyze a piece of literature within its specific cultural context
- a developing ability to apply a variety of scholarly or theoretical approaches to the analysis of texts
- a developing ability to frame a complex research question which builds on and responds to an ongoing critical discourse
- a basic ability to recognize and account for underlying theories, concepts, assumptions and arguments (both in one’s own analysis and in that of other critics)
- a basic ability to self-evaluate, so as to recognize and develop one’s best insights or questions
- a developing ability to respond constructively to criticism of one’s work
- an advanced ability to plan, organize, and take note notes

Communication Skills:

- a clear, concise and compelling prose style, free of technical errors
- a developing ability to structure a complex and engaging argument
- a developing ability to present one's own analysis within the context of a specific theoretical approach
- a developing ability to present one's own analysis while confidently engaging with existing scholarship
- a developing capacity to engage in class discussions and respond meaningfully to lecture material and peer discussion while using textual evidence as support
- a mastery of the format and citation method of academic writing

Research Skills:

- proficiency with the essential tools of literary scholarship and some of the more specialized tools for research in Canadian Literature
- an advanced appreciation of the use of citation in one's own work and within the critical tradition
- an advanced ability to critique, annotate, and review secondary sources appropriate to the course

Knowledge of Course Content:

- an increasingly advanced understanding of multicultural components of the Canadian literary tradition
- an advanced understanding and deployment of the language of literary analysis;
- a developing facility with selected approaches, theories and techniques which can be applied to the study of literature

Course Materials

Required Reading to be purchased by students:

John Marlyn, *Under the Ribs of Death* (1957) (novel)

Fred Wah, *Diamond Grill* (1996) ("bio-text")

Dionne Brand, *What We All Long For* (2005) (novel)

NEW addition to required readings: Ali Hassan, *Is There Bacon in Heaven?* (2022) (memoir)

Other (shorter) Required Readings (short stories, poetry, essays, scholarship, government documents) available via Course Readings, Western Libraries (linked to the OWL course site). (There is no additional cost for the required on-line readings: the cost is already covered in fees paid in your tuition, to defray the costs of the university's access to copyrighted materials for educational purposes.)

Methods of Evaluation

The grade for the course will be arrived at as follows:

20%: 2 x 2-page (double-spaced) Analyses of selected required readings (and/or Applications of course concepts to same)

10%: Consultation with instructor about your research essay plans and progress (i.e., identification of text and topic, anticipated search terms and search strategies); follow-up consultation with a record of search strategies and selected results in the form of a Preliminary Bibliography of 8 to 10 sources for your research essay)

35%: Research Essay of 2,500-3,000 words (including Works Cited) in MLA 9th edition format, double-spaced.

35%: Preparation of a sample final exam question, rationale for the question (why is it a good question for what has been studied in this course), and an essay answer to your question. Sample questions will be anonymized and circulated in our final class for discussion and ranking of best questions. Book prizes will be distributed for best questions. This exercise takes the place of an actual final examination for the course, while also functioning as a thorough review and self-assessment exercise (how would you do faced with these exam questions if you had to answer them in an exam?!).

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/Student%20Information.html>.

Attendance (University Policy)

Attendance is mandatory in all classes and tutorials. In cases of excessive absenteeism (e.g. more than 9 unexcused hours for a half course, 18 for a full course), which are not accounted for by either academic consideration or accommodation, students may be debarred from taking the final examination, and will receive an official warning to this effect by or before the course drop date (see Senate policy). In classes with or without final exams, students who do not attend class will receive 0% for course participation grades. Unless other policies dictate a different set of penalties in specific English and Writing Studies programs, this will apply to all department programs.

Intellectual Property/Copyright

All instructor-written materials (e.g. PowerPoints, lecture notes, oral lectures) for this course are created solely for students' personal use within the course, and remain the instructor's intellectual property. Further reproduction, fixation, distribution, transmission, dissemination, communication, or any other uses, without securing the consent of the copyright owner (the course instructor) may be an infringement of copyright. You may not distribute, email, or otherwise communicate these materials to any other person. These limitations extend to recording, photographing, or sharing lectures (online or in-person) and lecture material without permission. Posting the instructor's content from this course to online course sharing sites like OneClass or Course Hero without permission is both an infringement of intellectual property law and a violation of academic integrity guidelines. The instructor will pass these cases on to the Western University Ombudsperson or their Department Chair as appropriate.

Additional Information (course specific)

OWL course site:

We will use an OWL course site for the management of course materials (syllabus, weekly schedule, announcements, resources), submission and return of graded assignments (unless otherwise noted), and communication with the class as a whole during the term.

E-mails from instructor/GTA:

Students are responsible for reading all e-mail messages from the instructor and/or GTA, including any messages that come from the OWL course site's e-mail account). The instructor regularly uses OWL for important communications to the class as a whole (e.g., new resources added to the site; slight change to schedule, such as an extension to a due date; etc.).

MLA (9th edition) format and submissions of assignments:

Unless otherwise noted, all assignments are to be submitted to your Drop Box in the OWL English 3572F Course Site and formatted according to the MLA 9th edition.

E-mail outside of Monday-to-Friday “business” hours:

Be aware that e-mails may not be answered after 5pm on weeknights or at any hour on weekends. Try to think of this policy as follows: you would not phone your instructor at home at any time, would you? No. E-mails can be sent whenever you wish, but do your best not to expect an answer to e-mails outside of “business” hours. E-mail nevertheless is the best way to reach the instructor to book an appointment, should you have a scheduling conflict with office hours. Face-to-face conversations about the course are always preferable to e-mail. Additional office hours will be posted for the heaviest consultation times in the course (i.e., during the development of ideas for your research essay and the drafting of your critical annotations, etc.).

Considerations for Attendance for this course (see also the University Policy on Attendance above):

While attendance will not be taken in this course, the instructor reminds everyone that regular attendance, preparedness for class, active listening, active note-taking, and engaged contributions to class discussion will improve your overall learning experience. How? Through better comprehension of the readings, class lectures, and discussion; improved retention of course materials for quicker recognition of analytical connections between the readings (= more “A-ha!” moments); and greater enjoyment of the relevance and value of the readings and assignments in relation to this and your other course work and to other aspects of an informed life.

Late policy:

If you anticipate you will need an extension, ask for one in advance. Otherwise, late work will be penalized at the rate of 10% (of the value of the assignment) per day late (i.e., a paper worth 10% that is late 2 days would automatically become worth a maximum of 8%).

Use of Laptops:

Given that attendance will not be taken in class, the working assumption will be that students are in the classroom because they want to learn the course materials and develop their skills in relation to them. Thus, students may use laptops to take notes, look up materials pertinent to class content during class, and access online readings and other resources to be used during class time. But if during class time you find yourself using your laptop (or other devices) for social media and other activities unrelated to the course, then you should perhaps consider that your time might be better spent elsewhere than enrolled in this course.

Accommodation Policies

Students with disabilities work with Accessible Education (formerly SSD) which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The accommodation policy can be found here: [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#).

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth (either alone or in combination) 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 Student Medical Certificate (SMC) can be found at https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf.

The full policy is set out here:

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf.

Religious Accommodation:

Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give reasonable notice in writing, prior to the holiday, to the Instructor and an Academic Counsellor if their course requirements will be affected by a religious observance. Additional information is given in the [Western Multicultural Calendar](#).

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>.

All instances of plagiarism will be reported to the Chair of Undergraduate Studies. Proven cases of plagiarism will result in a grade of zero for the assignment. Subsequent offences will result in failure for the course.

Statement on Gender-Based and Sexual Violence

Western is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone through these traumatic events. If you have experienced gender-based or sexual violence (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts, [here](#). To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact support@uwo.ca.

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/>

Academic Support & Engagement <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.

Timetable

- 2 x 2-page (double-spaced) analyses due in Weeks 3 and 5 respectively
- Consultation with instructor about and completion of early components of the research essay to occur not later than Tuesday 14th November 2023
- Research Essay due not later than Monday 20th November 2023
- Sample Exam Question, Rationale, and Essay answer due not later than noonhour Wednesday 6th December (to allow time for instructor to anonymize questions and assemble for class discussion in our final class)