English 3713 WAO: Contemporary Canadian Literature

Lakehead University Orillia
Fall/Winter 2014-2015

Course Location: OA-2008
Class Times: Mondays and Wednesdays, 11:30 am – 1:00 pm
Prerequisites: One FCE in English at the first-year level including at least one of English 1111 or 1112, or permission of the Department

Instructor Information
• Instructor: Dr. Cheryl Lousley
• Office: OA-3015
• Telephone: 705-330-4008, ext. 2643
• Email: clousley@lakeheadu.ca
• Office Hours: Wednesdays, 1-2 pm (drop-in); or at other times and days by appointment (send me an email).

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Course Description
A study of selected contemporary Canadian literature. Canadian writing in the contemporary period is world-renowned, and often at the forefront of innovations in genre and style. This course will focus on poetry, short fiction, and novels, attending closely to forms of stylistic experimentation. Topics to be covered will include Canadian postmodernism; gender and sexuality; regionalism, nationalism, and globalization; immigration, diaspora, and multiculturalism; and work, love, and community.

Course Objectives
✓ to develop knowledge and critical understanding about the work of contemporary Canadian writers
✓ to become familiar with the main genres and literary forms of contemporary Canadian writing
✓ to understand the thematic, formalist, and theoretical frameworks through which the study of contemporary literature in Canada is approached
✓ to further develop academic skills in critical analysis, reading, writing, and oral performance
✓ to develop professional skills in collaboration, including attentive listening, critical reflection, persuasive argument, and facilitation

Course Resources

Required Course Text(s)
The following required texts are available for purchase at the Lakehead University Bookstore:

ENGL 3713 WAO Contemporary Canadian Literature Course package, compiled by Dr. Cheryl Lousley. Thunder Bay: Lakehead University, 2015.

Course Website
Assignment and other material will be regularly posted on the Desire2Learn course website, which can log into from the Lakehead website by clicking on mycourselink.
Course Schedule (subject to change)
These are the dates on which the listed texts will be discussed. Students are expected to come to class having read all the assigned readings because we will be actively working with these texts in class. Plan your time accordingly. This schedule is subject to change, as announced in class and/or on the online course site. All readings marked with an asterisk * are to be found in the course package.

M Jan 5    Dennis Cooley, “after words” interview and poetry selections from *By Word of Mouth* [posted on on-line course site]
W Jan 7    Dennis Cooley / Di Brandt, *Speaking of Power*

M Jan 12   Di Brandt, *Speaking of Power*
W Jan 14   Thomas Wharton, *Icefields*

M Jan 19   Thomas Wharton, *Icefields*
W Jan 21   Thomas Wharton, *Icefields*

M Jan 26   Dionne Brand, *No Language is Neutral*
W Jan 28   Dionne Brand, *No Language is Neutral*

M Feb 2    *Margaret Atwood, “True Trash”*

M Feb 9    Douglas Coupland, *Microserfs*

Reading Week

M Feb 23   Larissa Lai, *Salt Fish Girl*
W Feb 25   Larissa Lai, *Salt Fish Girl*

M Mar 2    Larissa Lai, *Salt Fish Girl*
W Mar 4    *Lisa Moore, “All Zoos Everywhere”; *Michael Winter, “Archibald the Arctic”*

M Mar 9    *Eden Robinson, “Queen of the North”
W Mar 11   Helen Humphreys, *Wild Dogs*
Assignments and Evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>%</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Length</th>
<th>Due Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10%</td>
<td>In-class discussion contributions</td>
<td></td>
<td>Every class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25%</td>
<td>Advance discussion preparation (12 x 2% each; 1 x 1%)</td>
<td>100-200 words each</td>
<td>Weekly; to be submitted to online forum ONE HOUR BEFORE assigned class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25%</td>
<td>Short essay: Postmodernism</td>
<td>1500-2000 words</td>
<td>February 11th at the beginning of class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40%</td>
<td>Research essay</td>
<td>2000-2500 words</td>
<td>April 1st at the beginning of class.</td>
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</table>

In-class discussion contributions (10%)

At all levels of scholarship, we learn by exchanging ideas with other people and working together as a research community to deepen our understanding of texts and contexts. All students are expected to contribute to general and small group discussion of course concepts. **Attendance is necessary but not sufficient** to make a contribution to discussion. Discussion participation throughout the semester will be evaluated on the basis of how well a student’s comments contribute to **furthering the learning of others and the pursuit of understanding**. Small-group discussion will usually be based on the advance discussion preparation described below.

Advance discussion preparation (12 x 2%, 1 x 1% = 25%)

To help develop critical reading and discussion skills, questions or tasks based on the assigned course readings will be given about once a week to prepare students for the upcoming class discussion. Responses should be brief (100-200 words). Do bring additional notes and textual evidence to support your points to class for the discussion itself. Post your response to the online forum **ONE HOUR BEFORE** class begins (at
latest). Other students will be able to see and comments on your posts: together, these posts will act as an interactive resource as you prepare your written assignments. Posts will be graded online. The initial post is worth 1%, and each subsequent post is worth 2% of your grade, to a total of 25% for thirteen topics.

**Short essay: Postmodernism (25%)**

Students will write a short essay that discusses a main idea about postmodern literature in relation to one of the texts studied in the first half of the semester. Several texts on postmodernism and contemporary Canadian literature have been placed on reserve at the Lakehead Orillia library and/or are available as e-books in the Lakehead library catalogue (see list on online course site). Students must choose one of these texts and identify a main idea that is relevant to one of our literary texts. The essay will clearly present the idea and use it to analyze the literary text.

Short essay due: Wednesday, February 11th at the beginning of class.
Length: 1500-2000 words

**Research essay (40%)**

The research essay will develop a literary interpretation of one of our studied course texts by placing it in the context of the relevant criticism on the text, author, or genre. The essay will summarize and synthesize the commentary that exists on the subject in order to assist with a strong and well-supported interpretation of the literary text. The essay will have a thesis, or argument, that is developed and supported with examples from the primary and secondary texts. A minimum of three scholarly, secondary sources is required for this essay. Only sources accessed through the Lakehead University library are appropriate. To get started on your library research, see this guide: [http://libguides.lakeheadu.ca/content.php?pid=479748&sid=3930822](http://libguides.lakeheadu.ca/content.php?pid=479748&sid=3930822)

Research essay due: Wednesday, April 1st at the beginning of class.
Length: 2000-2500 words

**Assignment Policies**

All written assignments are to be well-crafted works of writing without spelling or grammatical errors. **Expect to revise and polish your written work.**

- Written assignments should be typed and double-spaced with 12-point font and one-inch margins.
- Cover pages are not necessary. Binders and duotangs are discouraged.
• Put your full name, student number, assignment title, course name and number, submission date, and instructor name at the top of the first page on the left-hand side.
• Put your last name and page number on each subsequent page.
• Use the Modern Languages Association (MLA) style for citations and bibliography. Students unfamiliar with MLA style can consult the manual in the library reference section or the quick guidelines on the library website under Resources for English.
• Essays, discussion posts, and critical analyses are individual assignments and cannot be completed collaboratively.
• Assignments are due at the beginning of class on the dates indicated. If you do not hand in your paper in class, it is late. Submit late assignments to the instructor’s office.
• If you require an extension, you must ask for one BEFORE the due date.
• Please note that excessive workload, computer issues and vacation/travel plans do not constitute extenuating circumstances.
• Unless you ask for (and receive) an extension, late essays will be penalized by 2% per day (to a maximum of 20%).
• It is the student’s responsibility to retain a photocopy or electronic copy of all assignments submitted for grading; in the event of loss or theft, a duplicate copy is required.
• Exceptions to these policies are allowed only with a doctor’s note or other appropriate documentation.

Marking Standards
All assignments will be marked in accordance with the English Department Marking Standards: https://www.lakeheadu.ca/academics/departments/english/marking-standards.

Plagiarism
Plagiarism is the unacknowledged use of someone else's words and/or ideas. Not acknowledging your debt to the ideas of a secondary source, failing to use quotation marks when you are quoting directly, buying essays from essay banks, copying another student’s work, or working together on an individual assignment, all constitute plagiarism. Resubmitting material you’ve submitted to another course is also academic dishonesty. All plagiarized work (in whole or in part) and other forms of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Dean, who is responsible for judging academic misconduct and imposing penalties. The minimum penalty for academic misconduct is a 0 on the assignment in question. It might also be subject to more severe academic penalties. See the Code of Student Behaviour.
University Policies

• Students in this course are expected to conform to the Code of Student Behaviour: [https://www.lakeheadu.ca/faculty-and-staff/policies/student-related/code-of-student-behaviour-and-disciplinary-procedures](https://www.lakeheadu.ca/faculty-and-staff/policies/student-related/code-of-student-behaviour-and-disciplinary-procedures)

• Lakehead University provides academic accommodations for students with disabilities in accordance with the terms of the Ontario Human Rights Code. This occurs through a collaborative process that acknowledges a collective obligation to develop an accessible learning environment that both meets the needs of students and preserves the essential academic requirements of the course.

This course outline is available online through the English Department homepage and the Desire2Learn site for the course.