

**Carleton University  
Winter 2016  
Department of English**

**ENGL 2957A: Literatures of the Americas II**

*Precludes additional credit for ENGL 2909 (no longer offered).  
Prerequisite(s): second-year standing or permission of the department.*

**Mon/Wed 4:00 -5:30 pm**

**Location: Please confirm location on Carleton Central**

**Instructor: Prof. Sarah Phillips Casteel**

**Email: sarah.casteel@carleton.ca**

**Office: 1801 Dunton Tower**

**Office hours: TBA**

\* Preliminary outline- subject to change

**Course Description:**

The history of the Americas is characterized by the dramatic uprooting, mixing, and reinvention of cultures that resulted from Europeans' so-called discovery and colonization of the "New World" as well as the institution of slavery and other forced and voluntary migrations. This history presents both challenges and opportunities for contemporary writers of the Americas, who creatively negotiate the difficult legacies of colonialism and explore such themes as:

- the European fantasy of the New World as paradise
- the encounter between European and Indigenous cultures
- the trauma of the Middle Passage and plantation slavery
- the emergence of hybrid and creolized identities

In this introductory survey of the literatures of the Americas, we will adopt a hemispheric or comparative American studies approach, bringing into dialogue literary texts from the Caribbean, Latin America and North America. Giving special emphasis to diaspora, ethnic minority, and Indigenous writing, we will consider continuities and discontinuities among visions of the New World that have been put forward by major writers of the Americas including Alejo Carpentier (Cuba), Maryse Condé (Guadeloupe), Gabriel García Márquez (Colombia), and Gloria Anzaldúa (USA). Surveying a variety of genres of writing including magical realism and borderlands writing, our particular focus will be on the role that space, nature and landscape play in the articulation of New World identities.

Please note that this course is introductory and no previous knowledge of the literatures of the Americas is expected or required. Literatures of the Americas I is not a prerequisite for Literatures of the Americas II. Students from African studies, Latin American studies and other programs and disciplines are welcome so long as they have second-year standing.

### Course Requirements and Evaluation:

10%	<b>attendance and participation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• regular attendance is essential to your success in this course</li><li>• you are expected to come to class prepared, having completed the assigned reading and with the assigned text in hand</li><li>• the class will combine lecture and discussion; the quality of the class experience will depend on your willingness to engage with the texts and to share your views with your fellow students</li></ul>	
10%	<b>in-class writing exercises</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• periodically throughout the term you will be asked to complete in-class writing exercises</li><li>• the exercises may ask you to apply a new term or idea to the reading, give a close reading of a passage, or explore your own personal response to the reading or to an audiovisual work</li><li>• they will be unannounced and there will be no make-up exercises except in cases of serious illness (with doctor's note), bereavement, or religious observance</li><li>• <b>you may miss 1 in-class writing exercise without penalty</b>; if you complete all of the exercises, I will drop your lowest grade</li></ul>	
5%	<b>research essay proposal and annotated bibliography</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• provide a 1-paragraph description of your proposed topic and approach</li><li>• bibliographic entries should be in MLA format; each entry should summarize the central argument of the source and its relevance to the proposed essay topic</li></ul>	due in mid-March
35%	<b>research essay (8 pages)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• essays must address at least one of the assigned texts</li><li>• suggested topics will be distributed in class but I encourage you to develop your own topic if you wish</li></ul>	due in last class
40%	<b>final exam</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• one scheduled examination consisting of identifications and essay questions</li></ul>	during exam period

### Tentative Required Texts:

Alejo Carpentier, *The Kingdom of This World* (Douglas & McIntyre/FSG)

Maryse Condé, *I, Tituba, Black Witch of Salem* (University of Virginia)

Gish Jen, *Mona in the Promised Land* (Vintage)

Gabriel García Márquez, *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (HarperCollins)

Guillermo Verdecchia, *Fronteras Americanas* (Talon Books)

All texts will be available at Haven Books (43 Seneca St. at Sunnyside, (613) 730-9888). In addition, readings marked \* will be available in electronic format via CULearn and the Ares Course Reserves system (<http://libares01.carleton.ca/>) or the library catalogue. *If you find that a required reading is not available for a given week, please notify me immediately by email.*

### Recommended Texts and Resources:

I strongly recommend M.H. Abrams, *A Glossary of Literary Terms* (ITP Nelson/ Harcourt Brace), available at bookstores or in the reference section of the library (PN44.5.A2 1999). In addition, you may wish to consult the *MLA Style Manual* (PN147.A28) as well as the Purdue Online Writing Lab ([owl.english.purdue.edu](http://owl.english.purdue.edu)). Another valuable resource is the *Literature Resource*

Centre (available through the Library Web under "Online Resources": "Journal Articles and Databases").

## **PLAGIARISM**

The University Senate defines plagiarism as “*presenting, whether intentionally or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one’s own.*” This can include:

- reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else’s published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one’s own without proper citation or reference to the original source;
- submitting a take-home examination, essay, laboratory report or other assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, or paraphrased material, concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another’s data or research findings;
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another’s works and/or failing to use quotation marks;
- handing in "substantially the same piece of work for academic credit more than once without prior written permission of the course instructor in which the submission occurs."

Plagiarism is a serious offence that cannot be resolved directly by the course’s instructor. The Associate Dean of the Faculty conducts a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They can include a final grade of "F" for the course. For more information please go to:

<http://www2.carleton.ca/studentaffairs/academic-integrity>

## **Academic Accommodation**

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request the processes are as follows:

Pregnancy obligation: write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details see the Student Guide

<http://carleton.ca/equity/accommodation/academic/students/>

Religious obligation: write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details see the Student Guide above.

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520-6608 or [pmc@carleton.ca](mailto:pmc@carleton.ca) for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send me your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test

or exam requiring accommodation (if applicable). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the PMC website for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (if applicable).

## Course Policies

### Email:

- Please use your gmail email account so that I can communicate with you and so that you will receive class emails.

### Etiquette:

- Turn off all cell phones in class, as well as any other electronic devices.
- Refrain from talking during class or any other behaviour that is distracting to the instructor and your fellow students.
- Be respectful of each other's perspectives and strive to make sure that every student feels comfortable expressing his or her views.

### Completion of Assignments:

- In order to pass the course, **you must complete all** of the course requirements. This includes keeping up with the assigned reading and coming to class prepared and with the assigned text in hand.

### Plagiarism:

- Plagiarism is a serious offence, and I am required to report *all* cases to the Dean of the Faculty. Plagiarism includes copying from a book, article, or another student, downloading ideas or material from the internet, or otherwise submitting someone else's work or ideas as your own. See section 14 of the Undergraduate Calendar for further information and come see me if you have any questions or concerns regarding the appropriate use of secondary or internet sources.

### Exam:

- The exam will be held during the exam period. Make sure that you do not schedule any holidays until the exam schedule becomes available.

### Essay Format:

- Use **MLA format** for all citations, bibliographies etc. (consult the *MLA Handbook* or the Purdue Online Writing Lab at [owl.english.purdue.edu](http://owl.english.purdue.edu) for details).
- Staple your essay, double space the text, and type it in 12-point font.
- Include a title, word count, your name, my name, your student number, and the course number.

### Essay Content:

- Offer fully developed arguments, employing the vocabulary and analytical frameworks introduced in class.
- Ground your arguments in close readings of the texts and organize them around a central thesis.
- I encourage you to consult me, the TA, and/or the Writing Tutorial Service (404 MacOdrum Library, [wtsc@carleton.ca](mailto:wtsc@carleton.ca), 520-2600 x.1125, [www.carleton.ca/sasc/writing-tutorial-service](http://www.carleton.ca/sasc/writing-tutorial-service)) when preparing your essays.

### Grading of Essays:

- Essays are graded on logical coherence, grammar, spelling, adherence to MLA format and appropriate use of secondary sources.
- Keep your rough drafts and notes for each assignment. I reserve the right to examine such materials if I deem it necessary.
- Essays are due at the beginning of class on the date specified in the syllabus. **I will deduct a third of a letter grade per day late including weekends** (ie. a B would become a B-) and extensions will be granted only in cases of serious illness (with

doctor's note), bereavement, or religious observance. Any essays not handed directly to me during class must be handed in to the English Department secretary, who will date-stamp them.

- Late papers may be graded without comments.

### **Academic Accommodations**

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term because of disability, pregnancy or religious obligations. Please review the course outline promptly and write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist.

Students with disabilities requiring academic accommodations in this course must register with the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) for a formal evaluation of disability-related needs. Documented disabilities could include but are not limited to mobility/physical impairments, specific Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/psychological disabilities, sensory disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), and chronic medical conditions. Registered PMC students are required to contact the PMC, 613-520-6608, every term to ensure that your Instructor receives your Letter of Accommodation, no later than two weeks before the first assignment is due or the first in-class test/midterm requiring accommodations. If you only require accommodations for your formally scheduled exam(s) in this course, please submit your request for accommodations to PMC by the last official day to withdraw from classes in each term.

You can visit the Equity Services website to view the policies and to obtain more detailed information on academic accommodation at <http://carleton.ca/equity/accommodation>

**Schedule of Readings (subject to revision)**

<b>date</b>	<b>topic</b>	<b>reading</b>
Jan	<b>introduction</b>	
Jan	<b>do the Americas have a common literature?</b>	Neruda, "Ode to Walt Whitman"*
Jan	<b>slavery, the marvelous, and Caribbean spaces of resistance</b>	Carpentier, <i>Kingdom of This World</i> Part I
Jan		Carpentier, Part II
Jan		Carpentier, Parts III and IV
Jan		Condé, <i>I, Tituba, Black Witch of Salem</i> Part I
Jan		Condé, Part II
Feb		Condé, Epilogue
Feb	<b>the Latin American baroque</b>	Borges, "The Library of Babel"*
Feb		Márquez, <i>One Hundred Years of Solitude</i> , p.1-78
Feb		Márquez, p.79-203
Feb	<i>Reading Week</i>	
Feb		Márquez, p.203-313
Feb		Márquez, p.315-417
March	<b>the U.S. suburbs and diasporic belonging</b>	Roth, "Eli the Fanatic"*
March		Jen, <i>Mona in the Promised Land</i> , Part I
March		Jen, Part II
March		Jen, Part III
March	<b>the U.S.-Mexican borderlands</b>	Anzaldúa, <i>Borderlands/La Frontera</i> (excerpt)*
March		Cisneros, "Woman Hollering Creek"* Fuentes, "The Crystal Frontier"*
March	<b>Canada and the Americas</b>	King, "Borders"*
March		Verdecchia, <i>Fronteras Americanas</i> , Act I
March		essay writing workshop
April		Verdecchia, Act II
April	<b>conclusion</b>	exam review <b>*final essay due in class*</b>