

**Carleton University  
Fall 2022-Winter 2023  
Department of English**

**ENGL 1400: *Literature, Art and Culture*  
*Topic: Black Lives Matter***

**Prerequisites: none**

**Preclusions: ENGL 1000 (no longer offered), 1100, 1200, 1300, 1600, ENGL 1700 and  
FYSM 1004**

**Mondays and Wednesdays / 10:05 – 11:25 am**

**Location: SP 100**

**Format: In-person**

**Instructor:**

**Email: [estherpost@cunet.carleton.ca](mailto:estherpost@cunet.carleton.ca)**

**Office Hours: TBD**

Important note:

For information on deadlines for withdrawal from courses, please consult the Academic Year section of the Undergraduate Calendar (<https://calendar.carleton.ca/academicyear/>).

**I. Course description:** What began as a social media hashtag created in 2013 by three Black women has now become a major cultural movement in protest against systemic anti-Black racism in North America. In addition to the mass protests across thousands of cities that began occurring regularly in 2020, literature, poetry, music and music videos, visual art, and film provide further evidence of the significance of #BLM. This course will introduce students to the history of the movement and other protest cultures from which it grew, and will analyze, from an interdisciplinary perspective, some of its chief concerns and demands, particularly those related to the policing of and state-sanctioned violence against Black bodies. We will begin by studying how racism became institutionalized in North America during slavery, and how segregationist laws, federal drug policies, and the prison industrial complex have continued to reinforce systemic racism and injustice against Blacks in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. We will explore and reflect upon these issues through reading fictional and non-fictional literature, poetry and spoken-word poetry/slam poetry, watching films and music videos, and listening to music, podcasts, and TedTalks by Black academics and activists.

**TW:** Please note that we will be discussing potentially triggering issues throughout this course. By “triggering,” I do not mean that someone may be offended, uncomfortable, or mildly upset by sensitive or graphic content, but rather, an individual may experience a traumatic response. The history of Blacks in America and systemic racism is obviously not light subject matter, so be prepared to feel uncomfortable and perhaps even upset reading our subject material. Having said

that, you can skip any readings or videos that may be triggering for you, and I will give specific trigger warnings for each text each week.

**II. Learning Outcomes:** By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- understand the goals and origins of #BLM
- situate and contextualize #BLM within other social movements and protest cultures
- understand the legacies of slavery and the Jim Crow Era and its impact on the present
- assess the effects of incarceration and the war on drugs on BIPOC
- identify the primary goals and pressing issues of #BLM
- analyze how activists demonstrate resistance and empowerment

**III. Required Texts:**

Ta-Nehesi Coates, *Between the World and Me*

Toni Morrison, *Beloved*

Colson Whitehead, *The Nickel Boys*

Nic Stone, *Dear Martin*

Desmond Cole, *The Skin We're In*

Ava DuVernay (Dir.), *The 13<sup>th</sup>* (documentary film)

Tony Kaye (Dir.), *American History X* (film)

\*all books listed above will be available at Octopus Books, 161 Third Ave., Ottawa

\*all other cultural texts, including poetry, slam poetry, music videos and other videos, and podcasts will be made available to students online via Brightspace.

**IV. Course calendar: (\*subject to revisions)**

Dates	Topic	Readings/Viewings/Assignments
<p><b>Week 1:</b> Mon. Jan 9 and Wed. Jan. 11</p>	<p>What is #BLM?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “About #BlackLivesMatter.” <a href="https://blacklivesmatter.com/about/">https://blacklivesmatter.com/about/</a></li> <li>• “Six Years Strong.” <a href="https://blacklivesmatter.com/six-years-strong/">https://blacklivesmatter.com/six-years-strong/</a></li> <li>• “HerStory.” <a href="https://blacklivesmatter.com/herstory/">https://blacklivesmatter.com/herstory/</a></li> <li>• “<a href="#">An Interview with the Founders of Black Lives Matter.</a>” <i>TedTalks</i>, Oct. 2016.</li> <li>• <b>Music videos:</b></li> <li>• Childish Gambino, “<a href="#">This is America</a>” (2018)</li> <li>• Kendrick Lamar, “<a href="#">Alright</a>” (We Gon Be Alright”) (2015)</li> <li>• Grand Master Flash, “<a href="#">The Message</a>” (1982)</li> <li>• Run the Jewels featuring Pharrell Williams and Zack de la Rocha, “<a href="#">JUST</a>” (2020).</li> <li>• Sam Cooke, “<a href="#">A Change is Gonna Come</a>” (1964)</li> </ul>

<p><b>Week 2:</b> Mon. Jan. 16 and Wed. Jan. 18</p>	<p>Violence Against Black Bodies in America in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ta-Nehesi Coates, <i>Between the World and Me: Part One</i> (p. 5-71)</li> <li>• Don Lemon (CNN), “Trayvon Martin Shooting, Minute by Minute” (Dec. 3, 2012) <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ia0w_dOj7R4">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ia0w_dOj7R4</a></li> <li>• Nightline (ABC), “<a href="#">George Zimmerman Jury Sees Slain Trayvon Martin Photos.</a>” (Jun. 26, 2013). *NB: misleading title – no graphic photos are shown</li> <li>• Democracy Now, “<a href="#">Black Lives Matter: Ferguson Erupts After Grand Jury Clears Officer in Michael Brown Killing.</a>” (Nov. 25, 2014)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Week 3:</b> Mon. Jan. 23 and Wed. Jan. 25</p>	<p>The Legacies of Slavery</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Toni Morrison, <i>Beloved</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Week 4:</b> Mon. Jan. 30 and Wed. Feb. 1</p>	<p>Racial Segregation and Jim Crow Laws</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Colson Whitehead, <i>The Nickel Boys</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Week 5:</b> Mon. Feb 6 and Wed. Feb. 8</p>	<p>The Civil Rights Movement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Martin Luther King, “<a href="#">I Have a Dream</a>” (Aug. 28, 1963)</li> <li>• Malcolm X, (TBD)</li> <li>• Norman Rockwell, “The Problem We All Live With” (1964) (painting)</li> <li>• Lisa Whittington, “Emmett Till: How She Sent Him and How She Got Him Back” (2012 painting)</li> <li>• <b>* Critical Response Paper (20%) due 11:59 pm Wed. Feb. 8 at 11:59 pm*</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Week 6:</b> Mon. Feb. 13 and Wed. Feb. 15</p>	<p>Situating #BLM in Social Protest Movements</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Readings TBD</li> </ul>
<p><b>BREAK:</b> Mon. Feb. 20 and Wed. Feb. 22</p>		<p>NO CLASSES</p>
<p><b>Week 7:</b> Mon. Feb. 27 and Wed. Mar. 1</p>	<p>Racism and the Law I: Incarceration of</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ava DuVernay, Dir. <i>The 13<sup>th</sup></i> (documentary film, available on Netflix)</li> </ul>

	Blacks as Enslavement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Michelle Alexander, <i>The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness</i> (2010) (excerpts) [ARES]</li> <li>Angela Davis, <i>Are Prisons Obsolete?</i> (2003) (excerpts) [ARES]</li> </ul>
<b>Week 8:</b> Mon. Mar. 6 and Wed. Mar. 8	Racism and the Law II: Police Brutality and Racial Profiling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ta-Nehesi Coates, <i>Between the World and Me:</i> Part 2 (p. 73-132)</li> <li>Nic Stone, <i>Dear Martin</i></li> </ul>
<b>Week 9:</b> Mon. Mar. 13 and Wed. Mar. 15	Intersectionality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kimberle Crenshaw, "<a href="#">The Urgency of Intersectionality.</a>" <i>TEDTalk</i>. Dec. 7, 2016</li> <li>Treva B. Lindsey, "Post-Ferguson: A 'Herstorical' Approach to Black Violability." <i>Feminist Studies</i> 40.1 (2015): 232-237. [JSTOR]</li> <li>Beyonce, <i>Lemonade</i> (songs/videos from album OR film, available on Tidal)</li> <li>The GW Hatchet (George Washington University), "<a href="#">How is Pride Month Connected to Black Lives Matter?</a>" (Jun. 25, 2020)</li> <li><b>Recommended/optional:</b> Kimberle Crenshaw, "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence Against Women of Color." <i>Stanford Law Review</i> 43.6 (July 1991): 1241-1299. [JSTOR]</li> </ul>
<b>Week 10:</b> Mon. Mar. 20 and Wed. Mar. 22	Racism and Colonialism in Canada	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Desmond Cole, <i>The Skin We're In: A Year of Black Resistance and Power</i></li> <li><b>*Outline for Final Essay/Project due 11:59 pm Wed. Mar. 22*</b></li> </ul>
<b>Week 11:</b> Mon. Mar. 27 and Wed. Mar. 29	White Supremacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Danez Smith, "<a href="#">Dear White America.</a>" (spoken word poetry). (2014).</li> <li>Daryl Davies, "<a href="#">Why I, As a Black Man, Attend KKK Rallies.</a>" (Dec. 8, 2017).</li> <li><i>American History X</i> (film)</li> </ul>
<b>Week 12:</b> Mon Apr. 3 and Wed. Apr. 5	The Future of #BLM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ta-Nehesi Coates, <i>Between the World and Me:</i> Part 3 (p. 133-152)</li> <li>Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor, "<a href="#">From #BlackLivesMatter to Black Liberation.</a>" In <i>From #BlackLivesMatter to Black Liberation</i>. Haymarket: 2016. 191-220</li> <li>Damon Davis, "<a href="#">Courage is Contagious.</a>" <i>TedTalk</i>. (2017)</li> <li>Danez Smith, "<a href="#">Alternate Heaven for Black Boys.</a>" (spoken word poetry). (2016). (similar version</li> </ul>

		<p>published as “summer, somewhere” in <i>Don't Call Us Dead</i> (2017))</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Major Jackson, “<a href="#">On Disappearing</a>” (poem). (2013).</li> </ul>
<p><b>LAST CLASS:</b> Mon. Apr. 10</p>	<p>Course Review and Exam Prep</p>	<p><b>**Final Essay Due **</b></p>

### V. Evaluation:

Participation (ongoing, in weekly discussion forums)	15%
Critical Response (3-4 pages; due 11:59 pm Wed. Feb. 8)	20%
Outline for final essay/project (1-2 pages; due 11:59 pm Wed. Mar. 22)	15%
Final essay/project (due 11:59 pm Mon. Apr. 10)	25%
Final exam (formally scheduled by the university during the exam period in April)	25%

**\*detailed information and instructions for each of these components will be posted to Brightspace**

**Please note:** Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by the instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean

**\* Note: If one of your assignments is lost, misplaced, or not received by the instructor, you are responsible for having a backup copy that can be submitted immediately upon request.**

**Please note: all course materials, including recorded lectures, PowerPoint slides, assignments, essay topics, and discussion prompts are copyright of the instructor and are made available only to students registered in the course. Any reproduction or distribution of any of the course material is strictly prohibited.**

### COURSE POLICIES:

#### Essay style, format, and submission policies:

- All essays and other written assignments must be double spaced, formatted in Times New Roman font 12, with one-inch margins on all sides, and must conform to MLA style and documentation guidelines. Please consult the MLA style and documentation guidelines at [https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research\\_and\\_citation/mla\\_style/mla\\_formatting\\_and\\_style\\_guide/mla\\_formatting\\_and\\_style\\_guide.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/mla_style/mla_formatting_and_style_guide/mla_formatting_and_style_guide.html).
- All assignments must be submitted through Brightspace as digital copies and as a Word Document (no pdfs, google docs, or any other format will be accepted). Please note that as a Carleton University student, you have free access to Microsoft Word 360 (<https://carleton.ca/its/help-centre/get-microsoft-office-for-students/>).

### Late policies:

- If you are in a situation that warrants an extension (serious illness, etc.), please do not wait until the last minute to request an extension. Email me or speak to me in person as soon as you know you might not be able to meet a deadline, and depending on the circumstances, I will consider giving an extension. Extensions requested the day an assignment is due or after the due date will NOT be considered
- Due dates for the Final Research Essay and Take Home Exam are firm; if these assignments are submitted after the due date, they will not be graded and will receive a grade of zero
- There are no deadlines for participating in discussion posts (ie. responding to posts from other students, asking questions, etc.); however, students **should be posting regularly/on a weekly basis to gain full participation marks** (15%).
- All assignments EXCEPT for the Final Research Essay and Take Home Exam may be submitted up to 6 days past the due date with no late penalties
- Assignments submitted **one week after the due date** will penalized 5% for each day that it is late beginning on the 7<sup>th</sup> day. While such late assignments will be given a grade, they may not receive many or any detailed comments.

## VI. Statement on Plagiarism

### PLAGIARISM

The University Academic Integrity Policy defines plagiarism as “presenting, whether intentionally or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one’s own.” This includes 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. Examples of sources from which the ideas, expressions of ideas or works of others may be drawn from include but are not limited to: books, articles, papers, literary compositions and phrases, performance compositions, chemical compounds, artworks, laboratory reports, research results, calculations and the results of calculations, diagrams, constructions, computer reports, computer code/software, material on the internet and/or conversations.

Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to:

- any submission prepared in whole or in part, by someone else;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, paraphrased material, algorithms, formulae, scientific or mathematical concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another’s data or research findings without appropriate acknowledgement;
- submitting a computer program developed in whole or in part by someone else, with or without modifications, as one’s own; and
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another’s work and/or failing to use quotations marks.

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.

## VII. Statement on Student Mental Health

As a University student you may experience a range of mental health challenges that significantly impact your academic success and overall well-being. If you need help, please speak to someone. There are numerous resources available both on- and off-campus to support you. Here is a list that may be helpful:

**Emergency Resources (on and off campus):** <https://carleton.ca/health/emergencies-and-crisis/emergency-numbers/>

### Carleton Resources:

- Mental Health and Wellbeing: <https://carleton.ca/wellness/>
- Health & Counselling Services: <https://carleton.ca/health/>
- Paul Menton Centre: <https://carleton.ca/pmc/>
- Academic Advising Centre (AAC): <https://carleton.ca/academicadvising/>
- Centre for Student Academic Support (CSAS): <https://carleton.ca/csas/>
- Equity & Inclusivity Communities: <https://carleton.ca/equity/>

### Off Campus Resources:

- Distress Centre of Ottawa and Region: (613) 238-3311 or TEXT: 343-306-5550, <https://www.dcottawa.on.ca/>
- Mental Health Crisis Service: (613) 722-6914, 1-866-996-0991, <http://www.crisisline.ca/>
- Empower Me: 1-844-741-6389, <https://students.carleton.ca/services/empower-me-counselling-services/>
- Good2Talk: 1-866-925-5454, <https://good2talk.ca/>
- The Walk-In Counselling Clinic: <https://walkincounselling.com>

## VIII. Statement on Pandemic Measures

It is important to remember that COVID is still present in Ottawa. The situation can change at any time and the risks of new variants and outbreaks are very real. There are [a number of actions you can take](#) to lower your risk and the risk you pose to those around you including being vaccinated, wearing a mask, staying home when you're sick, washing your hands and maintaining proper respiratory and cough etiquette.

**Feeling sick?** Remaining vigilant and not attending work or school when sick or with symptoms is critically important. If you feel ill or exhibit COVID-19 symptoms do not come to class or campus. If you feel ill or exhibit symptoms while on campus or in class, please leave campus immediately. In all situations, you should follow Carleton's [symptom reporting protocols](#).

**Masks:** Masks are no longer mandatory in university buildings and facilities. However, we continue to recommend masking when indoors, particularly if physical distancing cannot be maintained. We are aware that personal preferences regarding optional mask use will vary greatly, and we ask that we all show consideration and care for each other during this transition.

**Vaccines:** While proof of vaccination is no longer required to access campus or participate in in-person Carleton activities, it may become necessary for the University to bring back proof of vaccination requirements on short notice if the situation and public health advice changes. Students are strongly encouraged to get a full course of vaccination, including booster doses as soon as they are eligible and submit their booster dose information in [cuScreen](#) as soon as possible. Please note that Carleton cannot guarantee that it will be able to offer virtual or hybrid learning options for those who are unable to attend the campus.

All members of the Carleton community are required to follow requirements and guidelines regarding health and safety which may change from time to time. For the most recent information about Carleton's COVID-19 response and health and safety requirements please see the [University's COVID-19 website](#) and review the [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#). Should you have additional questions after reviewing, please contact [covidinfo@carleton.ca](mailto:covidinfo@carleton.ca).

## **IX. Requests for Academic Accommodations**

Please include the following text, provided by Equity and Inclusive Communities, on all course outlines, and read it at the beginning of your first few classes to remind students. For details, see the [accommodations section](#) and the [Course Outline Information on Academic Accommodations](#).

### **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:** 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 accommodation regarding a formally scheduled final exam, you must complete the Pregnancy Accommodation Form ([click here](#)).

**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 [click here](#).

**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).

### **Survivors of Sexual Violence**

As a community, Carleton University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working, and living environment where sexual violence will not be tolerated, and where survivors are supported through academic accommodations as per Carleton's Sexual Violence Policy. For more information about the services available at the university and to obtain information about sexual violence and/or support, visit: <https://carleton.ca/equity/sexual-assault-support-services>

### **Accommodation for Student Activities**

Carleton University recognizes the substantial benefits, both to the individual student and for the university, that result from a student participating in activities beyond the classroom experience. Reasonable accommodation will be provided to students who compete or perform at the national or international level. 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. <https://carleton.ca/senate/wp-content/uploads/Accommodation-for-Student-Activities-1.pdf>