

Preliminary Outline Subject to Change
Carleton University Department of English

WINTER 2023

ENGL 3915A
SPECIAL TOPICS IN WRITING: WRITING ABOUT CLIMATE CRISIS

Prerequisite(s): third-year standing, a 2000-level creative writing workshop, and permission of the instructor.

Thursdays, 11:35-2:25; River Building 1200

Professor Nadia Bozak

Office Hours: by appointment

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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/>).

The information in this course outline may be subject to change in response to evolving public health guidelines related to the COVID-19 pandemic. It is also dependent on student enrollment.

Course Description:

This course is a creative writing workshop that explores creative ways of engaging with the very broad topic of anthropocentric climate change and the climate emergency we face.

Students may explore any number of methods of self-expression (fiction, poetry, creative nonfiction, photography, podcasts, music, to name a few), as long as they feel comfortable working in their chosen genre, medium, etc.

While this course is focused on developing and workshopping our own creative work, we will also read about and discuss how writers, artists, and filmmakers are confronting and engaging with climate crisis.

Bring your ideas, your stories, your energy, your visions of our climate future as we set out together to engage with this all-encompassing and urgent topic.

The questions and themes we tackle may include: biodiversity and the representation of non-human species or habitats; the emergence of new metaphors or other forms of figurative language that are useful for thinking about climate change; the ecological footprint of our own writing or other creative output (the use of natural resources, digital technology, various forms of energy); the impact of climate change on students' own particular life positions, experiences, and/or identities.

Learning Outcomes:

Students will emerge from this workshop with a polished creative project that engages with a well-defined aspect or problem of the globe's climate crisis in a chosen genre or medium.

The majority of each workshop will be spent discussing each other's creative work, thus developing skills in self-editing, closely reading as writers, and offering constructive feedback with diplomacy and tact. Students will also engage with radio podcasts, works of art, literature, and scholarship on climate crisis, further developing skills in analysis. Students will also prepare a short presentation on an assigned topic, prepare written responses to assigned readings, and participate in class discussions.

Remember: The success of this workshop and your development as a writer/artist/student depends upon attending the sessions regularly, contributing to discussions, and fully engaging in workshops. You should, therefore, be ready to circulate your creative work among your peers and have it openly discussed. As well as receiving and considering the comments of others into your writing, you will offer your peers constructive, thoughtful feedback as well.

The majority of our required weekly readings will be available digitally on Ares through the MacOdrum Library. Others may be posted on Brightspace.

Evaluation:

- 1) 5%: Final project description/rationale:** Beginning in Week Two, students will circulate a description and rationale for the project they intend to work on over the semester. We will discuss these in the workshop, offering advice, feedback, and other comments to support students as they move ahead with their projects.
- 2) 20% Participation:** Participation is based on attending workshops regularly, coming prepared to discuss assigned readings and weekly manuscripts, and preparing comments and feedback to be posted weekly on a "workshop discussion forum."
- 3) 15% Reading Responses:** Students will submit six responses to the assigned readings. More details TBD.

- 4) **10%: Presentation:** Students will choose a presentation topic in week one. More details TBD.
- 5) **20% Micro story/poem:** The first portion of the workshop will be devoted to working on a short micro-fiction story or poem to print in the Book Arts Lab.
- 6) **30% Final Project:** The final project can be broken down into two smaller components, or it could be one longer piece (such a 4,500-word story). Students who opt to work on two shorter pieces may also integrate printing their work in the Book Arts Lab into their project (details to come).

Weekly Course Schedule—Winter 2023

Week 1: Introduction/ The Rise of Cli-Fi

Jan. 12

- Introduction to the workshop, discussing goals, themes, and expectation
- *Sign up for presentations and manuscript submission dates*
- Reading due: **TBD**

Week 2: Shifting Paradigms

Jan. 19

- Workshop micro-fiction/ discuss project proposals
- Presentations:
- Reading due: Vandana Singh, *Ambiguity Machines* (“Indra’s Web” and *CBC Ideas*, “Imagining Extinction” <https://www.cbc.ca/listen/live-radio/1-23-ideas/clip/15879265-imagining-extinction>)

Week 3: “A Crisis of Culture”

Jan. 26

- Workshop micro-fiction
- Presentations:
- Reading due: Amitav Ghosh, *The Great Derangement*, 3-27; 58-63; 66-84

Week 4: Time and Language

Feb. 2

- Workshop micro-fiction
- Presentations:
- Reading due: Andri Snaer Magnason, *On Time and Water*, 68-78; 183-188; 189-206

Week 5: Interspecies Relations

Feb. 9

- Workshop micro-fiction
- Presentations:
- Reading due: Fahim Amir, *Being and Swine: The end of nature (as we knew it)*, 93-119

Week 6: Resources/ Sand**Feb. 16**

- Workshop micro-fiction
- Presentations
- Reading due: “How Sand Shapes Our World” <https://www.cbc.ca/listen/live-radio/1-23-ideas/clip/15915961-how-sand-shapes-our-world>
Vince Beiser, *The World in a Grain* (selections)

Reading Week: February 21-25, University Closed**Week 7: Resources/ Data as “the new oil”****Mar. 2**

- Workshop manuscripts/projects
- Presentations
- Reading due: Ronald J Deibert, “Burning Data” in *Reset: Reclaiming the Internet for Civil Society*

Week 8: Afrofuturism: Octavia E. Butler**Mar. 9**

- Workshop manuscripts/projects
- Presentations
- Reading due: *Parable of the Sower* (a graphic novel adaptation) *content advisory*
pages to be assigned

Week 9: Indigenous Knowledge**Mar. 16**

- Workshop manuscripts/projects
- Presentations:
- Reading due: Zacharius Kunuk, *Inuit Knowledge and Climate Change*
<http://www.isuma.tv/inuit-knowledge-and-climate-change>

Week 10: Apocalypse?**Mar 23**

- Workshop manuscripts/projects
- Possible CUAG Visit
- Reading due: CBC *Ideas*, “The Coming Zombie Apocalypse” and “Visions of Apocalypse”
<https://www.cbc.ca/listen/live-radio/1-23-ideas/clip/15804612-visions-apocalypse>
<https://www.cbc.ca/radio/ideas/the-coming-zombie-apocalypse-1.3288762>

Week 11: Resources/TBD**Mar. 30**

- Workshop manuscripts/projects
- Presentations

- Reading due: TBD

Week 12: Resources/ Sun, Image, Silver

Apr. 6

- Workshop Manuscripts/projects
- Presentations
- Viewing due: Metabolic Studio documentary:
<https://www.kcet.org/shows/artbound/episodes/agh2o-silver-and-water>

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.

- If you anticipate an adjustment of grades may take place, then you must include an explicit statement to this effect in your course outline.
- Examinations -- including in-class tests, take-home and formally scheduled examinations. Format (essay, multiple-choice, short-answer, other; cumulative vs. non-cumulative; etc.); how students can review their papers; % contribution towards the grade. Note that Deferred Final exams must be identical in format and coverage with the Final they replace.

N.B. Deferred finals, which must be applied for at the RO, are available ONLY if the student is in good standing in the course. If there are minimum standards that a student must meet to be in good standing, and entitled to write a deferred final exam, these must be stipulated in the course outline.

N.B. If you intend to request e-proctoring for any online examination, this must be stipulated in the course outline.

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.” According to the Department examples of plagiarism include the following:

- any submission prepared in whole or in part, by someone else;
- 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;
- 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 form of intellectual theft. It is a serious offence that cannot be resolved directly with the course's instructor. The Associate Deans of the Faculty conduct 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 failure of the assignment, failure of the entire course, or suspension from a program. For more information please go to: <https://carleton.ca/registrar/academic-integrity/>

Special Information Regarding Pandemic Measures

All members of the Carleton community are required to follow COVID-19 prevention measures and all mandatory public health requirements (e.g. wearing a mask, physical distancing, hand hygiene, respiratory and cough etiquette) and [mandatory self-screening](#) prior to coming to campus daily.

If you feel ill or exhibit COVID-19 symptoms while on campus or in class, please leave campus immediately, self-isolate, and complete the mandatory [symptom reporting tool](#). For purposes of contact tracing, attendance will be recorded in all classes and labs. Participants can check in using posted QR codes through the cuScreen platform where provided. Students who do not have a smartphone will be required to complete a paper process as indicated on the [COVID-19 website](#).

All members of the Carleton community are required to follow guidelines regarding safe movement and seating on campus (e.g. directional arrows, designated entrances and exits, designated seats that maintain physical distancing). In order to avoid congestion, allow all previous occupants to fully vacate a classroom before entering. No food or drinks are permitted in any classrooms or labs.

For the most recent information about Carleton's COVID-19 response and required measures, please see the [University's COVID-19 webpage](#) and review the [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#). Should you have additional questions after reviewing, please contact covidinfo@carleton.ca

Please note that failure to comply with University policies and mandatory public health requirements, and endangering the safety of others are considered misconduct under the [Student Rights and Responsibilities Policy](#). Failure to comply with Carleton's COVID-19 procedures may lead to supplementary action involving Campus Safety and/or Student Affairs.

Requests for 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 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>