

**\*PRELIMINARY OUTLINE—SUBJECT TO CHANGE\***

Fall/Winter 2023-24

Department of English Language and Literature

**ENGL 2802B: Indigenous and Canadian Literatures**

*Prerequisite(s): Second-year standing or permission of the department*

**Classes:** Mondays and Wednesdays 1:05-2:25 pm

**Format:** In-person, not suitable for online students

**Instructor:** Dr M. Susan Birkwood

**Email:** [Susan.Birkwood@carleton.ca](mailto:Susan.Birkwood@carleton.ca)

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*Carleton University is located on the traditional and unceded territory of the Algonquin Nation*

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**\*\*\*This is a preliminary syllabus only—texts and assignments are subject to change. A complete version will be available closer to the start of the term.\*\*\***

**Course Description:** This **writing attentive\*** course offers a survey of literary cultures in English within the geographical borders of what is known as Canada, from their beginnings to the present that frames them in the wider context of Indigenous writing and storytelling. We will discuss both oral and written traditions and engage with works of poetry, prose, and drama as we explore the literary, historical, political and / or geographical contexts of the selected works. Indigenous storytelling, the ongoing legacy of settler colonialism, strategies of nation-building, relationships to place, the experience of diaspora, and the influence of regional and international artistic movements— these are just some of the topics that will inform our study of the course readings. Genres represented may include the *Bildungsroman*, the elegy, the historical novel, and the western.

**General Learning Outcomes:**

By the end of this course, students should be able to do the following:

- Read and analyze texts accurately, contextually, and critically within the course framework
- Recognize generic conventions within poetry and prose contexts
- Recognize and analyse the use of rhetorical schemes and other aspects of poetic form
- Write clearly, while advancing and supporting arguments with sufficient specific, documented textual analysis that illustrates close reading of the literary text(s) in question

- Smoothly incorporate and properly document some research material from sources beyond the literary text being analysed

**ENGL 2802 Learning Outcomes** (with thanks to colleague Professor Jennifer Henderson for much of the wording):

By the end of this course, students should be able to do the following:

- Recognize alternate Indigenous mappings of Turtle Island and some of the land-language relationships specific to these geographies
- Recognize the specific status and function of Indigenous storytelling as a place-based practice of articulating and reinforcing relationships and responsibilities
- Read literary texts in terms of both their formal features and their signification within historical, political, legal, and cultural contexts
- Apply key concepts having to do with cultural interaction and literary relations in the context of settler colonialism
- Discern and discuss literary encodings of ideology, strategies of resistance, complexity and ambiguity in signification, and ethical issues in interpretation

**\*Writing Attentive:**

In English 2802, “writing attentive” means the following:

- Students will write at least one examination.
- Students will write a number of formal essays in which they are expected to do the following:
  - i. develop a thesis statement across each essay.
  - ii. develop complex ideas using correct and effective expression, according to academic practice.
  - iii. develop literary reading skills through close analysis of poetry and/or prose passages.
  - iv. use and cite evidence from primary texts appropriately, using the MLA documentation style.
  - v. develop secondary research and citation skills.
- A portion of class time will be devoted to developing and improving academic writing skills and research skills.
- ❖ *Generative AI will be a topic of discussion.*

**Required Texts:**

- We will read works of poetry, prose, and drama.
- The list of required texts will likely be available in **August**.
- The following list provides examples of texts studied in a previous year and does NOT reflect a confirmed selection for 2023-24. (Some of these works may or may not be included in the 2023-24 list.)
  - Thomas King, *Green Grass, Running Water*
  - Djaneet Sears, *Adventures of a Black Girl in Search of God*

- Martha Ostenso, *Wild Geese*
- Ethel Wilson, *Swamp Angel*
- Michael Ondaatje, *In the Skin of a Lion*
- Richard Wagamese, *Keeper'n Me*
- Eden Robinson, *Monkey Beach*
- David Chariandy, *Brother*

**Evaluation:**

Short analyses	15%
Reflection on experiential component (TBA)	10%
December in-person exam	15%
Winter-term essay	15%
Final in-person exam	25%
Engagement (incl. attendance, discussion, peer support)	20%

**Please note:**

- You must complete **the term work and the final exam** to be eligible to pass the course.
  - Should you find yourself in circumstances that threaten to preclude your successful completion of any assignment, please contact me before the relevant deadline. I would much rather work with you to find a solution than have you face the possibility of an unsuccessful outcome.
  
- ❖ “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” (FASS Teaching Regulations).