

**Carleton University**  
**Fall 2023 / Winter 2024 Preliminary Course Outline**  
**Department of English**

**FYSM 1004D: *Reading Literatures and Cultures***  
**Forms of the (De)colonial**

Precludes additional credit for ENGL 1000 (no longer offered), ENGL 1100, ENGL 1200, ENGL 1300, ENGL 1400, and ENGL 1600.

Prerequisite(s): Normally restricted to students entering the first year of a B.A., B.Cog.Sc., B.G.In.S, or B. CoMS program

**Tues. / Thurs. / 10:05-11:25 am**

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

**Instructor:** Professor Jody Mason

**Email:** jody.mason@carleton.ca

**\*\*\*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.\*\*\***

### **I. Course Description**

This course offers an introduction to the English-language literary and cultural forms produced in and through twentieth- and twenty-first-century experiences of colonization and decolonization. We'll think together about the promises of decolonization and the perils that beset its projects. We'll analyze a wide variety of texts from diverse political, social, and cultural locations—from Nigeria to Northern Ireland to Antigua. We'll ask how contexts like colonization; Empire; global capitalism; ideas about "race," purity, and development; and decolonization movements relate to form and genre.

This course is a mix of lecture-discussion and in-class workshop-style activities (group discussions and other interactive activities, group and individual assignments, etc.). This is a small class and it's not a lecture. We'll get to know one another.

Along the way, we'll learn how to write about cultural texts, and how to undertake secondary research on cultural topics. As in all sections of FYSM 1004, students will spend a significant amount of class time learning and improving university-level forms of thinking and writing, particularly essay-writing skills. We will concentrate on the following:

- establishment of university-level expectations for grammar and syntax
- establishment and refinement of literary-critical skills through close analysis of texts from a variety of genres
- generation and proof of an argumentative thesis across an essay

- establishment and refinement of arguments and opinions using persuasive, clear and grammatically correct English
- use and citation of primary literary texts in appropriate and convincing ways
- introduction to the fundamentals of secondary research (including critical evaluation, use and citation of academic sources)
- completion of a number of writing assignments which will include at least one formal scholarly essay
- writing at least one formally scheduled examination or a culminating reflective assignment

## II. Learning Outcomes

In this course we will learn to compare and evaluate the political, economic, and social contexts of colonial and postcolonial societies; to describe the forms and genres used in decolonial writing; to select appropriate forms of primary and secondary evidence; and to make arguments about decolonial texts using appropriate forms of evidence.

## III. Texts

Additional course readings will be posted on Ares (the electronic course reserve system).

Jeannette Armstrong. *Slash* (1985) [Theytus Books, 1995, ISBN: 9781894778459]  
 Kincaid, Jamaica. *Lucy* (1990) [Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2002, ISBN: 9780374527358]  
 Soyinka, Wole. *The Lion and the Jewel* (1962) [Oxford University Press, 1973, ISBN: 9780199110834]

\*strongly recommended: Modern Language Association of America. *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. 8<sup>th</sup> ed. [Modern Language Association of America, 2016, ISBN 9781603292627]

## IV. Evaluation

To pass this course, you must complete all term work. To pass this course, you must not miss more than 25% of the classes.

**45% Discussion + Workshop Participation**

**15% Short Assignments**

**15% Essay One**

**25% Essay Two**

**Discussion + Workshop Participation 45%**

This course comprises a mix of lecture-discussion and in-class, workshop-style activities.

•**Discussion Posts:** Five times per term, you will post a response to the “Discussion Posts” forum in Brightspace for the week in question; be prepared to talk about your response in class! (Prompts, guidelines for effective responses, as well as a rubric for evaluation, are posted on the assignment portal in

Brightspace.) Discussion Posts are due on Thursdays at the beginning of class; late posts will receive a zero. =**3% per response, or 30% of your final grade**

•**Workshop Activities:** We'll engage in regular in-class workshop activities (brainstorming, small group discussions, writing workshops, essay outlining). In determining your grade for the workshop activities, I'll be assessing class attendance, preparation for class, participation in workshop activities (this will often include submitting in-class writing exercises and / or uploading workshop activities to Brightspace). You'll receive a mid-term grade at the end of term one and a second grade at the end of term two. **7.5% x 2=15% of your final grade**

### **Short Assignments (15%)**

A major objective of this course is to teach students to write effectively about cultural and literary texts. Each of the following will be posted with more details on Brightspace. Please see the syllabus for deadlines.

- Analyzing Poetry (2.5%, opportunity for revision)
- Thesis Statement + Outline for Essay One (2.5%)
- Secondary Research Assignment (5%)
- Thesis Statement + Outline for Essay Two (5%)

### **Essay One (15%)**

This essay must be 1,000 words (roughly four pages) in MLA style. This is an essay on a single text, written in response to a question chosen from a selection I will provide. There will be time to work on the outline and the drafts of this essay in class. Fuller instructions and the submission portal can be found on Brightspace.

### **Essay Two (25%)**

This essay must be 1,500 words (roughly six pages) in MLA style. This is a research essay that focuses on a single text, written in response to a question chosen from a selection I will provide. There will be time to work on the outline and the drafts of this essay in class. Fuller instructions and the submission portal can be found on Brightspace.