

**Carleton University
Fall 2023 Preliminary Course Outline
Department of English**

**ENGL 4806A: Studies in Canadian Literature I
20th Century Canadian Fiction**

Prerequisites: fourth year standing or permission of the department.

**Tuesdays/Thursdays 4:05-5:25pm
Format: In-person, not suitable for online students**

**Instructor: Professor Collett Tracey
Email: Colletttracey@cunet.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.*****

Course Description:

Despite most peoples' ideas of Canadian literature, its canon is rich and vibrant. In recent years it has gained popularity, from both a political and literary point of view, and can now command a presence on the world stage. However, there seems to be a jump from studying 19th century texts to 21st century texts (whose numbers are prolific). As a result, many of our Modernist writers have been neglected or overlooked. This course seeks to remedy that issue. The books we will be reading together include the work of brilliant writers who gave Canada a voice from towns and cities across this vast country during the 20th century. Among other things, they speak of the immigrant experience, the pursuit of identity, the pursuit of love, cultural and social alienation, small town realities, the rise of feminism. And they do so from a quiet, personal space that we, as a class, will seek out and hear.

Required Texts: (Available at the university bookstore)

Novels: Engel, Marian. *Bear*.
Munro, Alice. *Lives of Girls and Women*
Moore, Brian. *The Luck of Ginger Coffey*
Findley, Timothy. *The Wars*

Short Stories: MacLennan, "The Halifax Explosion"
Ross, "The Painted Door", "The Lamp at Noon"
Wilson, from *Swamp Angel*
Vanderhaeghe, "The Watcher"
Laurence, "A Bird in the House", "Mask of the Bear"
Atwood, "The Bear Came Over the Mountain"
Hood, "Flying a Red Kite"
Smart, from *By Grand Central Station I Sat Down and Wept*

Rooke, "The Only Daughter"

Brand, "Photograph"

Wiebe, "Where is the Voice Coming From?"

Grading:

There will be three forms of evaluation. Given that there is no final examination, a significant percentage of your final grade will be based on attendance and participation. The rest of the grade will be based on a seminar presentation and an essay, which will be submitted during the final class. Grades for term work will be based on insightfulness, originality, focus, organization of ideas, clarity of expression, scholarly rigor, correct use of MLA style, spelling and grammar.

Attendance and Participation: 30%; Seminar Presentation: 30%; Final Essay: 40%

Class Participation/Attendance:

Critical reading, writing and analytical skills cannot be learned from books alone. Asking questions about the readings and contributing to class discussions will help you better understand the material, hone your critical and interpretive skills. Therefore, you are expected to attend all classes. Attendance will be taken on a random basis and absences will be noted. **Students who miss four or more classes per term will not be able to pass the course.** You are also expected to bring the assigned text having read it and being prepared for discussion. If you do have to miss a class, it is your responsibility to get notes from another student. **Unless absolutely necessary, due to a disability, cellphones and laptops must be turned off during class time.** To promote active reading, I encourage you, though, to take notes by writing in the margins of your books and poems, and by marking off key passages that stimulate thought or discussion.

Seminars:

You will be divided into small groups to facilitate more in-depth discussions about various texts. You will be required to do an in-class seminar in which you share, as a group, your collective understanding and research of a theme or issue. This can be done from a creative or academic point of view. With the understanding that some students are more extroverted or introverted than others, you will be able to participate in a way that is comfortable for you. However, whether or not you are actually presenting on the day of the seminar, you will be required to attend class and respond to questions from other class members. Each member of the seminar group will be asked to grade their peers on their contributions to the seminar, and themselves. The final grade, assigned by me, will take these evaluations into account.

The Essay:

You will be encouraged to devise your own essay topic in consultation with me. It should reflect ideas and material relevant to the issues that we will be discussing. You can base your essay on the works of a particular writer, which might be an in-depth study of a single text or a thematic exploration across more than one text. The usual essay rules apply: you will be expected to demonstrate a level of engagement and research that goes beyond the content covered in

seminars, and the essay must be presented in correct MLA scholarly format. The essay must be typed and paginated and accompanied with a complete cover page. You should always keep a digital copy of your essay.