

**Carleton University**

**Spring 2024 Preliminary Course Outline**

**Department of English**

**ENGL 1010A: Writing About Literature**

**Prerequisites: Open to students from all disciplines.**

**Precludes additional credit for ENGL 1020**

**Format: In Person**

**Instructor: Dr. Collett Tracey**

**Office Hours: TBD or by appointment**

**Email: [Colletttracey@CUNet.carleton.ca](mailto:Colletttracey@CUNet.carleton.ca)**

*(Note: 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 & Learning Outcomes:**

This course will teach students how to develop critical reading, research and writing skills. By focussing on several short stories, poetry and a novel, students will learn how to develop close reading techniques, improve their writing abilities, understand how to structure and organize their essays, and how to conduct research at the university in terms of providing proper documentation (MLA) and grammar.

We will be meeting twice a week for three hours each class. In the first week, I will offer an introduction to the course, an overview of the semester and will establish course expectations. After that, the course will be broken down into three sections: studying the short story form, poetry, and two novels. Each class will also be broken into three parts: In the first part, after doing an intense close reading of the text in question, we will deconstruct and analyze it with a view to pursuing various themes and literary forms that become apparent. The second part of the class will involve in-class writing exercises, and the third part will be run as a writing workshop so that you can offer and receive constructive feedback on your work.

*Please Note: ENG 1010 is a writing-intensive course; it is **not** an ESL course.*

*This means that, students will learn how to develop a thesis and argue it consistently across an essay, understand and use university-level expectations from grammar, style and syntax, develop complex ideas using correct and effective expression according to academic English practices, and be able to effectively cite evidence from primary texts.*

### **Texts:**

Short Stories & Poetry: Available online or in easy to access anthologies.

Stories will be drawn from the following list:

Gilman, "The Yellow Wallpaper"

Ross, "The Lamp at Noon"

Joyce, "The Rocking Horse Winner"

Jackson, "The Lottery"

Steinbeck, "The Chrysanthemums"

Novels: Findley, Timothy. *The Wars*  
Moore, Brian. *The Luck of Ginger Coffey*

### **Evaluation:**

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, participation, and in-class writing exercises. The rest of the grade will be based on two short essays. 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%; In-class writing exercises: 20%; Two short essays: 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 two 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 necessary, due to a disability, cellphones and laptops must be turned off during class discussions.** 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.

You will be divided into small groups to facilitate more in-depth discussions about various texts. You will be required to share, as a group, your collective understanding and research of a theme or issue.

### ***The Essays:***

You will be encouraged to devise your own essay topics in consultation with me. They 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 classes, and the essays must be presented in correct MLA scholarly format. They must be typed and paginated and submitted **in paper format** in class. Digital copies will not be accepted, although you should always keep a digital copy for your records, in case your paper disappears from my pile of markings.

### ***Handing In Assignments:***

Assignments are due in class on the dates indicated. Please do not slip the assignment under my office door; it is an easy way for it to get lost. Emailed or faxed assignments are NOT acceptable and will not be marked.