

**Carleton University**  
**Fall 2020**  
**Department of English**

**ENGL 1500 A: *Introduction to Creative Writing***

**Mondays / 8:35 – 11:25 a.m.**  
**Format: Blended**

**Instructor: John Coleman**  
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**Office Hours: Mondays, 11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.**

**I. Course description:** This online course will introduce students to writing fiction, creative non-fiction, drama and poetry. Students will learn different strategies for and approaches to writing in these genres. We will read exemplary short stories, life writing, poetry and dramatic writing, as well as introductory literary and writing theory, by writers from a variety of backgrounds and perspectives. We will also discuss what it can be like to be a writer in contemporary society. This will include topics on the dynamics of contemporary publishing and how writers from diverse communities can be both enabled and constrained by literary-industry practices.

This [online blended course](#) includes both asynchronous and synchronous activities. Our asynchronous activities will include watching pre-recorded lecture videos, participating in online discussion forums and completing assignments. Our synchronous activities will include optional class meetings held on Zoom during scheduled class time (see the Course Calendar for specific dates and times of each meeting). **Please note that all Zoom Class Meetings will be recorded and posted on cuLearn.**

- **Technological requirements:**
  - Computer or laptop
  - Internet and capability to access readings and course materials on cuLearn
  - Microsoft Word (available free here: <https://carleton.ca/its/ms-offer-students/>)
  - Zoom software and account (available free here: <https://zoom.us/freesignup>)

**II. Prerequisites:** None.

**III. Learning Outcomes:**

The purpose of this course is for students to:

- Be introduced to writing fiction, creative non-fiction, poetry and dramatic writing
- Practice and develop strategies for writing in these genres
- Be introduced to introductory writing and literary theory and criticism

- Learn what it can be like to be a writer in contemporary society

#### IV. Texts:

All required readings will be available on Ares. Scheduled readings are listed on the course calendar.

#### V. Course Calendar:

Date	Readings and Activities	Due
September 14	<b>Introduction to the course</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Read</u>: Course Outline</li> <li>• <u>Write</u>: Warm-Up Activity (<i>not submitted or marked</i>)</li> <li>• <b>Zoom Class Meeting: 10:45 – 11:25 a.m.</b></li> </ul>	
September 21	<b>Writing Fiction: Introduction to Literary Devices</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Read</u>: Lucia Engkent and Garry Engkent, “Understand literary terms” (pp. 99-106)</li> <li>• <u>Read</u>: Edgar Allen Poe, “The Cask of Amontillado”</li> <li>• <b>Watch</b>: Lecture Video(s)</li> <li>• <u>Write</u>: Writing Prompt 1 (due Oct. 5)</li> <li>• <b>Zoom Class Meeting: 10:45 – 11:25 a.m.</b></li> </ul>	
September 28	<b>Writing Fiction: Getting Started</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Read</u>: Francine Prose, “Close Reading”</li> <li>• <b>Watch</b>: Lecture Video(s)</li> <li>• <u>Write</u>: Writing Prompt 2 (due Oct. 5)</li> <li>• <u>Post</u>: Excerpt Post 1</li> <li>• <b>Zoom Class Meeting: 10:45 – 11:25 a.m.</b></li> </ul>	<b>Excerpt Post 1 due at 8:35 a.m.</b>
October 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Read</u>: Anne Lamott, “Shitty First Drafts”</li> <li>• <b>Watch</b>: Lecture Video(s)</li> <li>• <u>Post</u>: Reply 1</li> <li>• <b>Short Story Workshop</b>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Instructor and TA available on Zoom or email from 10:30 – 11:25 a.m.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<b>Reply 1 due at 8:35 a.m.</b>  <b>Writing Prompts 1 and 2 due at 11:59 p.m.</b>
<b>October 12</b>	<b>Statutory holiday. University closed. No class.</b>	
October 19	<b>Writing Poetry: Introduction to Poetic Devices</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Read</u>: Kevin Clark, “Words That Paint, Colors that Speak”</li> <li>• <u>Read</u>: Seamus Heaney, “The Seed Cutters” and “North”</li> <li>• <b>Watch</b>: Lecture Video(s)</li> <li>• <u>Write</u>: Writing Prompt 3 (due Nov. 9)</li> <li>• <b>Zoom Class Meeting: 10:45 – 11:25 a.m.</b></li> </ul>	<b>Reading Response 1 due at 8:35 a.m.</b>
<b>October 26</b>	<b>Fall Break. Classes are suspended.</b>	
November 2	<b>Writing Poetry: Can Poetry be Political?</b>	<b>Excerpt Post 2 due at 8:35 a.m.</b>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Read</u>: Dorothy Wang, “From Jim-Crow to ‘Color-Blind’ Poetics”</li> <li>• <u>Read</u>: Jacob Sam-La Rose, “Faith”</li> <li>• <b>Watch</b>: Lecture Video(s)</li> <li>• <u>Write</u>: Writing Prompt 4 (due Nov. 9)</li> <li>• <u>Post</u>: Excerpt Post 2</li> <li>• <b>Zoom Class Meeting: 10:45 – 11:25 a.m.</b></li> </ul>	
November 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Read</u>: Lynnette Hunter and Rebecca O’Rourke, “The values of community writing”</li> <li>• <b>Watch</b>: Lecture Video(s)</li> <li>• <u>Post</u>: Reply 2</li> <li>• <b>Poetry Workshop</b>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Instructor and TA available on Zoom or email from 10:30 – 11:25 a.m.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>Reply 2 due at 8:35 a.m.</b></p> <p><b>Writing Prompts 3 and 4 due at 11:59 p.m.</b></p>
November 16	<p><b>Dramatic Writing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Read</u>: “Starting Your Podcast: A Guide For Students”: <a href="https://www.npr.org/2018/11/15/662070097/starting-your-podcast-a-guide-for-students">https://www.npr.org/2018/11/15/662070097/starting-your-podcast-a-guide-for-students</a></li> <li>• <u>Write</u>: Writing Prompt 5 (due Nov. 30)</li> <li>• <b>Watch</b>: Lecture Video(s)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Reading Response 2 due at 8:35 a.m.</b></p>
November 23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Read</u>: Philip Lopate, “Writing Personal Essays: On the Necessity of Turning Oneself into a Character”</li> <li>• <b>Watch</b>: Lecture Video(s)</li> <li>• <u>Write</u>: Writing Prompt 6 (due Nov. 30)</li> <li>• <u>Post</u>: Excerpt Post 3</li> <li>• <b>Dramatic Writing Workshop</b>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Instructor and TA available on Zoom or email from 10:30 – 11:25 a.m.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>Excerpt Post 3 due at 8:35 a.m.</b></p>
November 30	<p><b>Writing Creative Non-Fiction: Life Writing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Read</u>: Beryl Gilroy, “Black Teacher”</li> <li>• <u>Read</u>: Susheila Nasta and Sandra Courtman, “An Interview with Beryl Gilroy”</li> <li>• <b>Watch</b>: Lecture Video(s)</li> <li>• <u>Post</u>: Reply 3</li> <li>• <b>Creative Non-Fiction Workshop</b>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Instructor and TA available on Zoom or email from 10:30 – 11:25 a.m.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>Reply 3 due at 8:35 a.m.</b></p> <p><b>Writing Prompts 5 and 6 due at 11:59 p.m.</b></p>
December 7	<p><b>Writing Creative Non-Fiction: Diversity in Contemporary Publishing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Read</u>: Menaka Raman, “Immigrant”</li> <li>• <u>Read</u>: Nick Tanner, “Literary prize bows to pressure over racial discrimination”</li> <li>• <b>Watch</b>: Lecture Video(s)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Excerpt Post 4 due at 8:35 a.m.</b></p> <p><b>Reading Response 3 due at 8:35 a.m.</b></p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Post</i>: Excerpt Post 4</li> <li>• <b>Zoom Class Meeting: 10:45 – 11:25 a.m.</b></li> </ul>	
December 11 (Monday schedule)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Post</i>: Reply 4</li> <li>• <b>Final Project Workshop:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Instructor and TA available on Zoom or email from 10:30 – 11:25 a.m.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<b>Reply 4 due at 8:35 a.m.</b>  <b>Final Project due at 11:59 p.m.</b>

**Note:** The **Readings and Activities** section of our course calendar lists what you should read, watch or write for each class:

- Read indicates a reading to complete **before class**.
- **Watch** indicates pre-recorded lecture video(s) to watch during or after class. Each video will be available on cuLearn by 8:35 a.m. on the day of the class.
- *Write* indicates a writing activity that will be assigned on that date and then submitted by the deadline noted in the Due section of the course calendar. The instructions for each writing activity will be available on cuLearn by 8:35 a.m. on the day it is assigned.
- *Post* indicates an excerpt or a reply that is due on the discussion forum by 8:35 a.m. on that day.
- Our **Zoom Class Meetings** and **Workshops** are live synchronous meeting times when you will be able to connect with the instructor and TA. The link to attend each Zoom Class Meeting will be posted on cuLearn under the date of the scheduled meeting.
  - ⇒ Please note that attendance at our Zoom Class Meetings and Workshops is **optional. All Zoom Class Meetings will be recorded and posted on cuLearn.** Workshop meetings over Zoom will not be recorded or posted.
- Please note that additional reading materials, such as lecture slides, factsheets or review materials, may be posted on cuLearn throughout the course.

## VI. Evaluation:

**General criteria that influence grading:** *All work completed for this course will receive a numerical grade that corresponds to the guidelines set out by the Faculty of Arts:*

- 90-100 – A+
- 85-89 – A
- 80-84 – A-
- 77-79 – B+
- 73-76 – B
- 70-72 – B-
- 67-69 – C+

63-66 – C  
60-62 – C-  
57-59 – D+  
53-56 – D  
50-52 – D-  
Below 50 – F

All term work will be subject to the following general evaluation criteria:

Each student is encouraged to genuinely engage with course material by expressing clear ideas about assigned readings, lecture material and class discussions.

Furthermore, it is paramount for students to display a genuine attempt at:

- (a) developing writing and comprehension skills
- (b) genuine, critical engagement with course material

*Aside from the excerpt posts and replies, all written assignments designated under “Term Work” will be subject to the following evaluative criteria in addition to any particular criteria stated in each assignment’s outline:*

- 1) Written assignments are to be presented in MLA citation style and format. All references must be cited parenthetically in your prose. Written assignments should be formatted following MLA style (typed, double-spaced, 12 point Times New Roman Font, numbered pages, identification info at top left-hand corner of page one). Students are encouraged to consult the Eighth Edition of the *MLA Handbook*.
- 2) Where applicable, significant consideration will be paid to:
  - (a) accuracy in identifying texts, authors and context
  - (b) effective expression and communication of ideas through proper grammar, spelling, punctuation and sentence and paragraph structure

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.

### **Term Work:**

- **3 Reading Responses, 5% each for a total of 15% of the final grade:**

Students will write three reading responses based on topics assigned by the instructor. Each response should be 1 to 1.5 typed, double-spaced pages (250-400 words). Further explanation will be provided in each reading response’s assignment instructions, which will be provided in advance of each due date.

- ⇒ Due dates (also noted on the course calendar):
- Reading Response 1: October 19 at 8:35 a.m.

- Reading Response 2: November 16 at 8:35 a.m.
- Reading Response 3: December 7 at 8:35 a.m.

- **6 Writing Prompts, 5% each for a total of 30% of the final grade:**

In six classes, students will be given a writing prompt based on the genre we are currently studying. Students will write a creative piece in response to each prompt, as well as a brief reflection on specific writing principles they have learned and employed in the piece. Students will get feedback from the instructor or TA on their pieces, and they will select from these pieces to revise and submit in their final project. Further explanation will be provided in the assignment instructions at the beginning of the term.

⇒ Due dates (also noted on the course calendar):

- Writing Prompts 1 and 2: October 5 at 11:59 p.m.
- Writing Prompts 3 and 4: November 9 at 11:59 p.m.
- Writing Prompt 5 and 6: November 30 at 11:59 p.m.

- **4 Excerpt Posts and 4 Replies, 25% of the final grade:**

- Excerpt Posts: Students will post an excerpt from four creative writing pieces on a discussion forum on cuLearn. Students have the option of writing or recording their excerpts. If written, an excerpt should be 75-100 words in length. If recorded, an excerpt should be about 1 minute in length.
- Replies: Students will reply to at least one other person's post on the dates noted below. Students have the option of writing or recording their replies. If written, a reply should be 30-40 words in length. If recorded, a reply should be about 20-25 seconds in length.
- Each post and associated reply are worth 6.25%. Further explanation on the structure of discussion posts and replies will be provided in the assignment instructions at the beginning of the term.

⇒ Due dates (also noted on the course calendar):

- Post 1: September 28 / Reply 1: October 5
- Post 2: November 2 / Reply 2: November 9
- Post 3: November 23 / Reply 3: November 30
- Post 4: December 7 / Reply 4: December 11

- **Final Project, due December 11 at 11:59 p.m., 30% of the final grade:**

Students will submit a final project consisting of a selection of revised writing prompts they have written throughout the term, and a reflection on how the experience of taking part in our

writing workshops and class activities has helped them develop as a writer. Further explanation will be provided in the assignment instructions in advance of the due date.

**Policy on submitting assignments:** All term work is due in digital format on cuLearn on the date and time noted on the course calendar. Submission portals where students can submit assignments will be made available on cuLearn. Assignment instructions will specify the method of submission for each assignment; this will include typing or recording directly in an assignment portal on cuLearn, uploading an assignment as a Microsoft Word .docx file to an assignment portal on cuLearn, or another method to be specified by the instructor. Submission of an assignment outside of these specifications will not be accepted unless prior arrangements have been made with the instructor.

**Late Assignment Policy:** After its due date, each late assignment will be docked 2% per day up until one week after the due date, after which it will receive a grade of zero.

**Policy on Extensions:** Extensions for term work will be considered on a case-by-case basis. If a student is aware in advance that an extension will be needed, they must provide the instructor with a valid reason at least one week before the due date, and a new due date may be negotiated.

In emergency circumstances within one week of the due date, the instructor must be made aware of the situation and valid reasons necessitating an extension immediately, and a new due date may be negotiated.

For late assignments to be accepted without being docked late marks, official documentation noting the student's inability to attend class and/or complete school work, such as a doctor's note or documentation of a personal emergency, may be necessary.

**Policy on lost assignments:** If a student claims to have submitted an assignment and the instructor has not received the assignment, the student must email the instructor an electronic version of the assignment within two hours of email request by the instructor.

**Policy on returning graded assignments:** The instructor and teaching assistant will strive to return all graded assignments within two weeks of submission. The primary methods of returning graded assignments will be: via the assignment portal on cuLearn with edits and comments; the submitted Microsoft Word .docx file with the Track Changes function used to show edits and comments; or a PDF version of the submitted Microsoft Word .docx file with the Track Changes function used to show edits and comments.

**Policy on communicating with the instructor:** The instructor will be available during office hours (Mondays, 11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.) over email and Zoom, when students can email the instructor and get a quick response, or connect to the Zoom office hours portal on cuLearn. Outside of office hours, the instructor can only be contacted by email; from Monday to Friday, the instructor will strive to reply to emails within 24 hours; emails received on weekends or holidays will be replied to on the following weekday that the university is open.

**Statement on Accessibility:** A variety of measures will be made to make our course materials accessible. To request additional measures or alternate assignment submission formats, please contact the instructor at [johncolem3@cunet.carleton.ca](mailto:johncolem3@cunet.carleton.ca).

## **VII. Statement on Plagiarism:**

### **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.” This can include:

- 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;
- submitting a take-home examination, essay, laboratory report or other assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else;
- 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/>



## VII. 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 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](#).

**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](mailto: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 must 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>