

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

**ENGL 2109a: Gender, Sexuality, and Literature**

**Prerequisites:** 1.0 credit in ENGL at the 1000 level or permission of the department

**Preclusions:** ENGL 2902 (no longer offered)

**Time:** Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1-2:30 pm

**Location:** online (CULearn)

**Format:** asynchronous

**Instructor:** Dr. Esther Post

**Email:** [estherpost@cunet.carleton.ca](mailto:estherpost@cunet.carleton.ca)

**Office hours:** Mondays 1-3pm by appointment (online)

**Course description:**

In this course, we will study and critically analyze literature that represents a diverse array of marginalized gender and sexual identities. Drawing upon a wide range of critical discourses on gender, sex, and sexuality, we will examine how gender and sexuality is constructed in literature, and will explore issues of gender identity, sexual identity, sexual relations and experiences, desire, the body, and the intersections between. We will investigate the various cultural, religious, political, and historical forces that have shaped gender and sexual norms, and will consider the ways in which literature of the last century reproduces and/or resists such norms. All course content, included recorded lectures, will be delivered online at CULearn asynchronously, but students will have the opportunity to engage with the instructor and other students for class discussions through optional meetings using Zoom, BigBlueButton, or Microsoft Teams (TBD).

**REQUIRED TEXTS:**

Vladimir Nabokov, *Lolita* (novel)

Alison Bechdel, *Fun Home: A Family Tragicomedy* (graphic novel)

André Aciman, *Call Me By Your Name* (novel)

Philip Roth, *Portnoy's Complaint* (novel)

Alice Walker, *The Color Purple* (novel)

Waawaate Fobister, *Agokwe* (play) [ARES]

Jeanette Winterson, "The Poetics of Sex" (short story) [ARES]

Ivan Coyote, "No Bikini" (short story) [ARES]

*Paris is Burning*, dir. Jennie Livingstone (documentary film; available on Netflix)

\*All novels will be available at Octopus Books, 116 Third Ave. by the first week of classes and may be ordered online at <https://octopusbooks.ca/shop>. Short stories will be available online at

CULearn through ARES.

### **Learning Outcomes:**

This course will teach students how to:

- critically read, interpret, and analyze literature
- understand and implement terminology related to gender, sexuality, and literature
- examine and challenge representations of gender and sexual identity in society and in literature
- place literature in its important historical, cultural, and political contexts
- write critically about literature

### **Course Format:**

This course will be taught online in an asynchronous format. Each week prior to our scheduled class time, I will post recordings of lectures, powerpoint slides to accompany the lectures, and discussion questions in our discussion forum on CULearn. Lectures /videos will be recorded in small segments, rather than as a single 1.5-hour lecture. Students must remain up to date with the reading and assignment schedule, ensuring that readings are completed before our scheduled class time, and that deadlines are met for all assignments. Students will also have the opportunity to connect with me and other classmates for discussions using Zoom, BigBlueButton, or Teams (TBD). More information on these optional meetings will be provided.

### **Technical Requirements:**

Students will need a computer with high-speed Internet access to view videos, lectures, slides, and handouts on CULearn, and to submit assignments. Ideally, students will have a webcam and mic to meet with the instructor and/or other students virtually.

### **Evaluation**

Participation (intro discussion post; responses to others' posts; see CULearn)	10%
Passage analysis (3 pages; due Tuesday, Sept. 29)	15%
Discussion forum posts (5 X 5%; 300-500 words each; due dates ongoing; see CULearn)	25%
Final essay/project (due Dec. 10)	25%
Final exam (formally scheduled by the university during the exam period in December)	25%

**Please note:** 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

**Note:** If one of your assignments is lost, misplaced, or not received by the instructor, you are responsible for having a backup copy that can be submitted immediately upon request.

**Please note: all course materials, including recorded lectures, powerpoint slides, assignments, exams, and discussion prompts are copyright of the instructor and are made available only to students registered in the course. Any reproduction or distribution of any**

**of the course material is strictly prohibited.**

## **COURSE POLICIES:**

### **Essay style, format, and submission policies:**

- All essays and other written assignments must be double spaced, formatted in Times New Roman font 12, with one-inch margins on all sides, and must conform to MLA style and documentation guidelines. Please consult the MLA style and documentation guidelines at [https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research\\_and\\_citation/mla\\_style/mla\\_formatting\\_and\\_style\\_guide/mla\\_formatting\\_and\\_style\\_guide.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/mla_style/mla_formatting_and_style_guide/mla_formatting_and_style_guide.html).
- All assignments must be submitted through CULearn as digital copies and as a Word Document (no pdfs, google docs, or any other format will be accepted).

### **Late policies:**

- Deadlines for the 5 discussion forum posts are 1 pm on the first day that we begin each new text (marked with an asterisk on the schedule below); forums will be closed to posts at 1 pm each on these dates, and late posts will not be accepted or graded
- Given the less than ideal circumstances under which we are all working and studying, I will be flexible with due dates for the passage analysis assignment, although it is in your best interest to submit this assignment as early as possible so that you may receive detailed feedback from me about your writing and analytical skills early on the term
- There are no deadlines for participating in discussion posts (ie. responding to posts from other students, asking questions, etc.); however, you should be posting regularly/on a weekly basis to gain full participation marks (10%).
- The university has mandated that all final term work (including your final essay/project) is due by **Dec. 11, 2020**.
- Assignments submitted one week after the due date will be given a grade, but may not receive many detailed comments

**Plagiarism:** There will be a policy of ZERO TOLERANCE for 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/secretariat/wp-content/uploads/Academic-Integrity-Policy.pdf> and <https://carleton.ca/registrar/academic-integrity/>.

### **COURSE EXPECTATIONS and CLASSROOM NETIQUETTE**

- Students are expected to have read the assigned material before our scheduled class time, and to respond to discussion prompts before our scheduled class time.
- **CULearn:**
  - You will be required to use CULearn on a regular basis, as all relevant documents related to our course, including the syllabus, assignment instructions, lectures, etc. will be uploaded to this page. Most importantly, treat this syllabus as your bible for this course, as it provides all necessary information in terms of reading and assignment schedules, submission policies, etc.
  - You should also frequently check the announcements on our course page at CULearn, as this is where I will post important announcements and information
- **Classroom netiquette:** I will be discussing this in more detail in my intro lectures, but these are some of the most important principles:
  - Always remember that there are real people behind screens and be respectful
  - No harassing, racist, homophobic, sexist, or transphobic language will be tolerated
  - Avoid using all caps, as it often comes across as shouting at and/or bullying
  - Emoticons can be helpful to convey tones, but avoid using them too much
  - Avoid dominating discussions online so that everyone gets the chance to participate
  - Always read over your posts before sending them
  - Be careful when using humour or sarcasm and ensure that your tone is properly conveyed
  - Keep an open mind, so that you are prepared to have your thinking challenged
  - Debates are certainly welcome, and, in fact, encouraged! But again, ensure that you are respectful of others' opinions

### **Contact with the instructor:**

- The best way to get in contact with me is by email ([EstherPost@cunet.carleton.ca](mailto:EstherPost@cunet.carleton.ca)). I check email at least once a day, and will respond to emails within 48 hours, though it could take longer on weekends.
- When emailing, please be professional. Do not use text speak, do not begin your email with an informal greeting such as "hey!", and identify yourself by your full name as well as the course code.
  - Emails should be reserved for clear, precise questions; they should not be used to ask questions such as, "what should I read for next week?" or anything else that simply requires you to read the syllabus.
- I am available to meet with students virtually (using either Zoom, BigBlueButton, or

Teams – TBD) on Mondays from 1-3 pm, or at another time by request. Please email me if you would like a meeting or have any questions or concerns

### **ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS:**

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request, the processes are as follows:

#### **Pregnancy obligation**

Please 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, visit the Equity Services website: <https://carleton.ca/equity/contact/form-pregnancy-accommodation/>

#### **Religious obligation**

Please 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, visit the Equity Services website: <https://carleton.ca/equity/focus/discrimination-harassment/religious-spiritual-observances/>

#### **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. Please 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>

### **Class Schedule (\*subject to change)**

Thurs. Sept. 10: Introduction to course, overview of syllabus

Tu. Sept. 15: overview of important terms; Michel Foucault, “We ‘Other’ Victorians” and excerpts from “The Repressive Hypothesis” [ARES]

Th. Sept. 17: *Lolita*\*

Tu. Sept. 22: *Lolita*

Th. Sept. 24: *Lolita*

Tu. Sept. 29: *Fun Home*\* **\*PASSAGE ANALYSIS DUE\***

Th. Oct. 1: *Fun Home*

Tu. Oct. 6: *Fun Home*

Th. Oct. 8: *Call Me By Your Name* \*

Tu. Oct. 13: *Call Me By Your Name*

Th. Oct. 15: *Call Me By Your Name*

Tu. Oct. 20: Audre Lorde and Adrienne Rich; Winterson, “The Poetics of Sex” \*

Th. Oct. 22: Winterson, cont’d

Tu. Oct. 27: READING WEEK (NO CLASS)

Th. Oct. 29: READING WEEK (NO CLASS)

Tu. Nov. 3: *Portnoy’s Complaint* \*

Th. Nov. 5: *Portnoy’s Complaint*

Tu. Nov. 10: *Portnoy’s Complaint*

Th. Nov. 12: Walker, *The Color Purple*\*

Tu. Nov. 17: *The Color Purple*

Th. Nov. 19: *The Color Purple*

Tu. Nov. 24: *Agokwe*\*

Th. Nov. 26: *Agokwe*

Tu. Dec. 1: Ivan Coyote, “No Bikini” \*

Th. Dec. 3: *Paris is Burning* (film)

Tu. Dec. 8: *Paris is Burning* (film)

Th. Dec. 10: FINAL CLASS \*FINAL ESSAY/PROJECT DUE\*