

**Carleton University
Winter 2022
Department of English
ENGL 2920 Topics in Decolonization and Migration I
Prerequisite(s): Second-year standing or permission of the department**

**Monday & Wednesday: 16:05-17:25
Format: In-Person
Location: University Centre Room: 182
Instructor: Ross Chiasson
Email: ross.chiasson@carleton.ca
Office Hours: Weds. 14:00 – 15:00 and by appointment**

In this course, we will study the practice of walking as it pertains to the history of migration and decolonization in North America. The trails, roads, and highways on which we walk offer traces of lived histories of displacement; narratives of walking document and recall the conditions of chattel slavery, forced removal, migrant labor, and residential schooling. If walking is a sign of vulnerability, however, it is also vital to the practice of resistance and the cultivation of alternative forms of knowledge and knowledge-making: these same roads serve as sites of protest, where people march together, and as pathways to reeducation. At key moments, we will pause to consider the make-shift classrooms of freedom and survival schools where people in transit have recollected shared histories and built common futures. As public spaces, the road and the schoolhouse are intimately connected: narratives of walking are often also stories of radical learning and it is in the classroom that the communities essential to social transformation are forged. Throughout, we will consider how the past and the stories we tell about the past—in poetry and image, monument and song—shape the spaces, and the movement within them, that we participate in daily.

In this course, I hope you will learn how to interpret and interrelate a variety of texts in different media; think deeply about the relationship between culture and history and, in particular, the relationship between decolonization and education; develop interesting and original ideas that evolve over the course of the semester; express yourself in clear and concise prose; generate questions and ideas collectively through discussion. I have designed this course to counteract the isolation that some of us have experienced during the pandemic and look forward to finding ways that we can work together and learn from one another.

Books

Colson Whitehead, *The Nickel Boys* (2019)

Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* (1845)

Armand Ruffo, *Treaty #* (2019)

Books for the course will be available from *Haven Books*. *Hamilton* is available on Disney+ (video recording of live performance), Spotify (soundtrack), or YouTube

(soundtrack). Other materials for the course (film, videos, readings, images) will be available on ARES and/or Brightspace.

Class Format

On Monday, January 10, we will meet to discuss the course and go over assignments and policies. Each week we will meet for lecture on Monday where we will come up with questions to be addressed on Wednesday during class discussion. Attendance each week is mandatory. You will also be expected to have completed the readings for the date in which they are first assigned – for instance, some weeks will focus on a certain section of a given text on both the Monday and Wednesday class. In that case, you are expected to have completed the readings for Monday. If Wednesday's reading is different from Monday's then you are not expected to have completed that reading until Wednesday.

Class Participation

Attendance in class and participation in discussion will form an important part of your final grade for the course. I will ask you speak in class. If it is for any reason difficult for you to participate in class discussion, please get in touch with me early in the semester and we can work together to find a good alternative.

Assignments

Portfolio

Your assignments for the course will be submitted on CU Portfolio. If you should have any difficulties using the portfolio, please contact Stacy Malloch at cuportfolio@carleton.ca.

Journal

You will make an entry in your journal **ten out of the twelve weeks of the course** that records your responses to our reading, viewing, and listening; reflects on key ideas generated by my lectures; records your developing ideas. **Five of your journal entries must be before Reading Week (Feb 22-25) and five must be after.** I ask that you write at least part of the entry before Monday's lecture with your first impressions of the readings for that week. Some students like to finish their entries after class on Wednesday in order to incorporate class discussions. Whether you write once (before class) or twice (before and after class) is up to you and can vary from week to week.

The sky is the limit in terms of approach: your journal may include still and moving images, recorded sound, and found materials. It may combine analytical, autobiographical, and creative writing. It may comment on contemporary events. I will often give you questions and prompts for a given week's entry that you may use if you want to.

Final Assignment

You will have a final assignment due at the end of the semester. This assignment will ask you to summarize and synthesize some of the diverse materials and ideas that we study over the course of the term. The form of the assignment remains to be determined. I would like it to capture and reflect the work we have done together and will ask for your input and suggestions as the semester unfolds.

Self-Evaluation

I will ask you to write two self-evaluations—one at the beginning and one at the end of the term. These will be included in your portfolio. In the first, you will describe your objectives for the term, identify the grade that you would like to receive, and explain what you plan to do in order to achieve it. Together we will work toward this goal. At the end of the semester, you will reflect on what you have learned and what grade seems appropriate.

Grading and Assessment

My final determination of your grade will be based on these four things: 1) did you do the reading/viewing regularly and on time? 2) did you attend and participate in weekly discussions? 3) did your journal, entry revision, and final assignment demonstrate engagement, polish, creativity, and independent thought? 4) did you meet the goals you established for yourself at the beginning of the semester?

With these questions in mind, your grade will be loosely based on class participation (40%), journal (40%), and final assignment (20%). These percentages are, however, not written in stone and when determining your final grade, I will keep individual circumstances in mind. You should feel free to check in with me about your grade at any point during the term.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

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.” According to the Department examples of plagiarism include the following:

- any submission prepared in whole or in part, by someone else;
- 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;
- 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/>

Dean's Statement on Grades and Standing

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.

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 accommodation regarding a formally-scheduled final exam, you must complete the **Pregnancy Accommodation Form**.

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 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/focus/sexual-violence-prevention-survivor-support/>

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 will 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>

Special Information Regarding Winter 2022 Pandemic Measures

All members of the Carleton community are required to follow COVID-19 prevention measures and all mandatory public health requirements (e.g. wearing a mask, physical distancing, hand hygiene, respiratory and cough etiquette) and [mandatory self-screening](#) prior to coming to campus daily.

If you feel ill or exhibit COVID-19 symptoms while on campus or in class, please leave campus immediately, self-isolate, and complete the mandatory [symptom reporting tool](#). For purposes of contact tracing, attendance will be recorded in all classes and labs. Participants can check in using posted QR codes through the cuScreen platform where provided. Students who do not have a smartphone will be required to complete a paper process as indicated on the [COVID-19 website](#).

All members of the Carleton community are required to follow guidelines regarding safe movement and seating on campus (e.g. directional arrows, designated entrances and exits, designated seats that maintain physical distancing). In order to avoid congestion, allow all previous occupants to fully vacate a classroom before entering. No food or drinks are permitted in any classrooms or labs.

For the most recent information about Carleton's COVID-19 response and required measures, please see the [University's COVID-19 webpage](#) and review the [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#). Should you have additional questions after reviewing, please contact covidinfo@carleton.ca

Please note that failure to comply with University policies and mandatory public health requirements, and endangering the safety of others are considered misconduct under the [Student Rights and Responsibilities Policy](#). Failure to comply with Carleton's COVID-19 procedures may lead to supplementary action involving Campus Safety and/or Student Affairs

Schedule

JANUARY

Week 1: "Themes for English B"

10

Introduction

12

Langston Hughes, "Theme for English B"

<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/47880/theme-for-english-b>

Week 2: Frederick Douglass Pt. 1

17

Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*

(Including William Lloyd Garrison, "Preface," Wendell Phillips, "Letter") through Ch. VI

19

Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*

(Including William Lloyd Garrison, "Preface," Wendell Phillips, "Letter") through Ch. VI

Week 3: Frederick Douglass Pt. 2

24

Finish *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*

26

Finish *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*

Week 4: Manifest Destiny

31

Walt Whitman, "Song of the Open Road" (1856)

John Gast, "American Progress" (1872)

Woody Guthrie, "This Land Is Your Land" (1940)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wxIMrvDbq3s>

Nick Spitzer, "The Story of 'This Land Is Your Land,'" National Public Radio, February 15, 2002

<https://www.npr.org/2000/07/03/1076186/this-land-is-your-land>

FEBRUARY

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Walt Whitman, "Song of the Open Road" (1856)

John Gast, "American Progress" (1872)

Woody Guthrie, "This Land Is Your Land" (1940)

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<https://www.npr.org/2000/07/03/1076186/this-land-is-your-land>

Week 5: Treaty #

7

Armand Ruffo, “Impetus Ungainly/Treaty No. 9,” “The Poet,” “Mississauga Golf Club,” “Hidden Residential School Graveyard,” “Terra Nullius Lingus,” “Treaty Letter,” “The Claim,” “Why Don’t You Write,” “Under Construction,” “Indian Fare” from *Treaty #* (2019)

9

Marie Battiste, “Mi’Kmaq Education: Roots and Routes,” from *Decolonizing Education: Nourishing the Learning Spirit* (2013)

Week 6: Freedom School Poetry

14

Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, selections from *Freedom School Poetry* (1966)
https://www.crmvet.org/poetry/64_fskool_poems-r.pdf

Julie Davis, Chs. 3 from *Survival Schools: The American Indian Movement and Community Education in the Twin Cities* (2013)

“Abraham Lincoln to Henry H. Sibley” (December 6, 1862)
<https://hd.housedivided.dickinson.edu/node/40494>

Freedom Schools

<https://snccdigital.org/inside-sncc/culture-education/freedom-schools/>

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Richie Havens, “Follow the Drinking Gourd”
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9H8NwpHEjIM>

Ladysmith Black Mambazo, “Swing Low, Sweet Chariot”
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IEKXt2EfyLQ>

READING WEEK FEB 22-25 – NO CLASSES

Week 7: *The Nickel Boys* Pt. 1

28

Colson Whitehead, *The Nickel Boys* through Ch. 8

“Canada’s Grim Legacy of Cultural Erasure in Poignant School Photos,” NYTimes (July 5, 2021) <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/05/world/canada/Indigenous-residential-schools-photos.html>

MARCH

2

Colson Whitehead, *The Nickel Boys* through Ch. 8

Week 8: *The Nickel Boys* Pt. 2

7

Finish *The Nickel Boys*

Photographs of survival schools

<http://www.aim-ic.org/red-school-house/ru6kul6ut84wsspl8ev83nu577djii>

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Finish *The Nickel Boys*

Week 9: Martin Luther King Jr.

14

Martin Luther King, “I Have a Dream Speech” (1963) and “Address at the Conclusion of the Selma to Montgomery March” (1965)

Robin D.G. Kelley, “‘When History Sleeps’: A Beginning,” introduction to *Freedom Dreams: The Black Radical Imagination* (2002)

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Ava DuVernay, “Selma” (2014)

Week 10: *Hamilton* Pt. 1

21

Lin Manuel-Miranda, *Hamilton: The Musical* – Act 1 (Up to and including “Non-Stop”)

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Lin Manuel-Miranda, *Hamilton: The Musical* – Act 1 (Up to and including “Non-Stop”)

Week 11: *Hamilton* Pt. 2

28

Lin Manuel-Miranda, Finish *Hamilton: The Musical*

30

Lin Manuel-Miranda, Finish *Hamilton: The Musical*

APRIL

Week 12: Wrapping Up

4

Nick Estes, “Prologue: Prophecy,” introduction to *Our History is the Future: Standing Rock Versus the Dakota Access Pipeline and the Long Tradition of Indigenous Resistance* (2019)

Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, “Introduction: This Land,” from *An Indigenous People’s History of the United States* (2014)

The Roots, “Ain’t Nobody Gonna Turn Me Round”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uJ6mhRZ8LjM>

#StandingRockSyllabus

<https://nycstandswithstandingrock.wordpress.com/standingrocksyllabus/>

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Last Class

Final Assignment and Self-Evaluation Due