

Carleton University
Fall 2020

Department of English

ENGL 3501A: Literatures and Cultures 1900-Now

Prerequisites: Third-year standing or permission of the department.

Preclusions: Precludes additional credit for ENGL 3502 (no longer offered).

New online learning modules posted: Thursdays, 10:00 a.m. EST on cuLearn

Location: online, cuLearn / Format: Asynchronous

Instructor: **Prof. Brian Johnson**

T. A.: **Meghan Tibbits-Lamirande**

Email: brian.johnson@carleton.ca

Email: MeghanTibbitsLamiran@cmail.carleton.ca

Prof. Johnson's Office Hours: Tuesdays, 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Big Blue Button

Course Description

In this online course, students will explore a wide range of twentieth- and twenty-first-century fiction through the study of shorter prose works, with an emphasis on style, literary and cultural history, and the relation between literary fiction and popular genre writing. Individual units will focus on the development of—and tangled interrelations between—realism, modernism, postmodernism, post-postmodernism, postcolonialism, Indigenous and diasporic writing, afrofuturism, science fiction, magic realism, etc. Classes will consist of weekly asynchronous video lectures and asynchronous online discussion via message board. Evaluation will consist of message board participation, short assignments, and a major student anthology project (due in stages over the course of the term) in which each student, drawing principally but not exclusively on material from the course syllabus, will curate, annotate, and write a scholarly introduction to their own anthology of fiction since 1900, organized around a theme of their choosing.

Technical Requirements for Online Learning

The following is a list of minimum recommendations. For program-specific requirements, please see the corresponding section below. For additional information see: <https://carleton.ca/its/help-centre/faq-technical-specs-for-new-students/>

| Requirement | Windows-based PC | Apple Mac/macOS-based PC |
|-------------------|--|--|
| Operating System | Windows 10 | macOS 10.15 |
| Web Browser | Google Chrome, Firefox, Edge | Google Chrome or Firefox |
| Processor | Intel Core i5 based model | Intel Core i5 based model |
| RAM/Memory | 4 GB, Min | 4 GB |
| Storage | Minimum 5 GB available space | Minimum 5 GB available space |
| Screen Resolution | 1024 x 768 | 1024 x 768 |
| Connectivity | WiFi or Ethernet; available USB post(s) to accommodate recommended accessories | WiFi or Ethernet; available USB post(s) to accommodate recommended accessories |
| Security | Antivirus | Antivirus |
| Internet Speed | Min. 5 Mbps download | Min. 5 Mbps download |
| Accessories | Speakers, Microphone or Headphones, Video Camera, Keyboard | Speakers, Microphone or Headphones, Video Camera, Keyboard |

Choosing What You Read: An Important Heads Up About the Reading List!

Because we will be working online, asynchronously, and because of the unusual nature of the anthology project (which requires that you have access to a wide variety of works and authors as opposed to simply a few novels), my expectations about how you participate in and engage with the course are a bit different than what they would be if this were an in person, lecture-based course. The biggest difference in the day-to-day functioning of the class is that I do not expect you to read every primary text on the syllabus, but I do expect you to read at least half of them and I do expect you to listen to all of the lecture material and read all of the posted secondary material, even if it concerns primary texts you did not read (you will understand why in a moment). You are of course more than welcome to read everything, and I hope you will! But I also recognize that our current reality is stressful, distracting, demanding, and something we are all constantly adapting to as the public health crisis around Covid-19 continues to change. As will become evident from the targeted discussion forum topics (and as you begin to develop your individualized anthology project), it will make good sense for you to curate your individual reading list from the total list of posted texts as we move through the term. Aim to read 2-3 primary texts each week. (Some weeks there might be some additional short readings in excess of these; they will be signalled as such in the Learning Module.) To help you decide what to read, I would recommend watching the video lectures and checking the discussion forum topics for that week first—typically, I will group 1-3 texts together within a single forum to facilitate a discussion of some issue or other. Sometimes a single text will receive its own forum, too. In any event, knowing how the forums are grouping the texts for discussion will help you decide what to focus on in your own reading choices that week.

Inclusivity Statement

I am committed to fostering an environment for learning that is inclusive for everyone regardless of gender identity, gender expression, sex, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, ability, age, class etc. All students in the class, the instructor, and any guests should be treated with respect during all interactions. It is my hope that our class will support diversity of experience, thought, and perspective.

Please feel free to contact me via email, anonymously, or in person to let me know about any experiences you have had related to this class that have made you feel uncomfortable. I will continually strive to create inclusive learning environments and would therefore appreciate your support and feedback. If you would prefer to talk to someone other than myself, please feel free to contact our Chair, Dr. Janice Schroeder <JaniceSchroeder@cunet.carleton.ca>. Additionally, I welcome emails or synchronous “in person” communications to let me know your preferred name or pronoun.

On how to deal with offensive language in primary texts when quoting from them in the Discussion Forum and in your Student Anthologies, see “Discussion Forums Language Statement” and “Student Anthology Project Language Statement” below.

Texts

All of the texts required for this course are available to be read free online or may be downloaded via ARES. Links to all of these texts (whether for online reading or download) are posted on our cuLearn course page.

Aboulela, Leila. "The Museum." *Elsewhere, Home*, Grove Atlantic, 2019, pp. 157-183.

Achebe, Chinua. "Dead Men's Path." *Girls at War and Other Stories*, Heinemann, 1972, pp. 78-82.

Adesanmi, Pius. "Oota." *You're Not a Country, Africa*, Penguin, 2011, pp. 3-9.

Adjei-Brenyah, Nana Kwame. "The Era." *Guernica*, 2 April 2018,
<https://www.guernicamag.com/the-era/>.

Atwood, Margaret. "Happy Endings." *Murder in the Dark*, Coach House, 1983, pp. 37-40.

Baldwin, James. "The Outing." *Go the Way Your Blood Beats: An Anthology of Lesbian and Gay Fiction by African-American Writers*, edited by Shawn Stewart Ruff, Henry Holt & Co., 1996, pp. 27-52.

Ballard, J. G. "Billennium." *The Complete Stories of J. G. Ballard*, Norton, 2009, pp. 267-78.

----- "The Drowned Giant." *Terminal Beach*, Penguin, 1966, pp. 40-51.

Barth, John. "Lost in the Funhouse." *Lost in the Funhouse*, Doubleday, 1968, pp. 72-97.

Barthelme, Donald. "The Balloon." *Sixty Stories*, G. P. Putnam's, 1981, pp. 53-58.

Borges, Jorge Luis. "The House of Asterion." *Labyrinths*, New Directions, 1964, pp. 138-140.

Bradbury, Ray. "There Shall Come Soft Rains." *The Martian Chronicles*, Time, 1963, pp. 248-255.

Brand, Dionne. "I Used to Like the Dallas Cowboys." *Sand Souci and Other Stories*. Firebrand, 1989, pp. 115-130.

Breton, André and Phillippe Soupault. "White Gloves." *The Milk Bowl of Feathers: Essential Surrealist Writing*, edited by Mary Ann Caws, New Directions, 2018, pp. 18-19.

Butler, Octavia. "Bloodchild." *Bloodchild and Other Stories*, Second Edition, Seven Stories, 2005, pp. 1-32.

----- "The Book of Martha." *SciFi.com*, 2003,

https://www.lexal.net/scifi/scifion/originals/originals_archive/butler2/butler21.html.

Carter, Angela. "The Tyger's Bride." *The Bloody Chamber*, Harper & Row, 1979, pp. 61-83.

Césaire, Aimé. "Notebook of a Return to the Native Land [excerpt]," translated by Clayton Eshleman and Annette Smith. *Poets.org*, <https://poets.org/poem/notebook-return-native-land-excerpt>.

Don DeLillo, "Human Moments in World War III." *Granta*, 1 March 1984,
<https://granta.com/human-moments-in-world-war-iii/>.

Du Bois, W. E. B. "The Comet." *Darkwater: Voices From Within the Veil*, Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1920, *Project Gutenberg*, http://www.gutenberg.org/files/15210/15210-h/15210-h.htm#Chapter_X.

Gibson, William. "Burning Chrome." *Hackers*,

https://www.baen.com/Chapters/9781625791474/9781625791474__3.htm.

Hemingway, Ernest. "Hills Like White Elephants." *Men Without Women*, Scribner, 1997, pp. 50-55.

Hurston, Zora Neale. "Sweat." *Hitting a Straight Lick with a Crooked Stick*, Amistad, 2020, pp. 113-128.

James, Henry. "The Jolly Corner." *Project Gutenberg*, <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/1190/1190-h/1190-h.htm>.

- James, M. R. "Oh, Whistle, and I'll Come For You, My Lad." *Project Gutenberg*, <http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/8486/pg8486-images.html>.
- Jewett, Sarah Orne. "A White Heron." *A White Heron and Other Stories*, The Riverside Press, 1886, pp. 1-22, *Sarah Orne Jewett Text Project*, <http://www.sarahornejewett.org/soj/awh/heron.htm>.
- Kafka, Franz. "The City Coat of Arms." *Franz Kafka the Compete Stories*, Schocken Books, 1972, pp. 433-434.
- King, Thomas. "Borders." *One Good Story, That One*, Harper Collins, 1993, pp. 129-145.
- Kincaid, Jamaica. "At the Bottom of the River." *At the Bottom of the Rivewr*, Farrar, Strauss, and Giroux, 1983, pp. 62-82.
- "On Seeing England for the First Time." *Transition* 51, 1991, pp. 32-40.
- Kipling, Rudyard. "The Mark of the Beast." *The Mark of the Beast and Other Stories*. Signet, 1964, pp. 43-56.
- London, Jack. "To Build a Fire." *Lost Face*, Mills & Boone, 1919, pp. 47-70, *Project Gutenberg*, <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/2429/2429-h/2429-h.htm#page47>.
- Márquez, Gabriel García. "The Last Voyage of the Ghost Ship." *Collected Stories*, translated by Gregory Rabassa and J. S. Bernstein, Harper Perennial, 1999, pp. 265-271.
- "The Very Old Man With Enormous Wings." *Leaf Storm and Other Stories*, translated by Gregory Rabassa, Harper & Row, 1972, pp. 105-112.
- Mukherjee, Bharati. "The World According to Hsü." *Darkness*, Penguin, 1985, pp. 35-56.
- Murphy, Pat. "Rachel in Love." *Daughters of Earth: Feminist Science Fiction in the Twentieth Century*, edited by Justine Larbalestier, Wesleyan UP, 2006, pp. 217-43.
- Okorafor, Nnedi. "Mother of Invention." *Slate.com*, 21 February 2018, <https://slate.com/technology/2018/02/mother-of-invention-a-new-short-story-by-nnedi-okorafor.html>.
- Roanhorse, Rebecca. "Welcome to Your Authentic Indian Experience." *Apex Magazine*, 8 August 2017, <https://apex-magazine.com/welcome-to-your-authentic-indian-experience/>.
- Robinson, Eden. "Terminal Avenue." *So Long Been Dreaming: Postcolonial Science Fiction and Fantasy*, edited by Nalo Hopkinson and Uppinder Mehan, Arsenal Pulp Press, 2004, pp. 62-69.
- Rushdie, Salman. "Chekov and Zulu." *East, West*, Jonathan Cape, 1994, pp. 147-171.
- Smith, Zadie. "Now More Than Ever." *Grand Union*, Penguin Press, 2019, 225-237.
- Thompson-Spires, Nafissa. "Whisper To a Scream." *The Heads of the Colored People*, 37ink.Atria, 2019, pp. 119-134.
- Wallace, David Foster. "Little Expressionless Animals." *The Paris Review*, vol. 106, 1988.
- Walrond, Eric. "The Wharf Rats." *Tropic Death*. Liveright, 1954, pp. 67-83.
- Woolf, Virginia. "A Mark on the Wall." *A Haunted House and Other Short Stories*, The Hogarth Press, 1973, pp. 40-48.
- "The Searchlight." *Faded Page*, <https://www.fadedpage.com/books/20130339/html.php>.
- Zoline, Pamela. "The Heat Death of the Universe." *The Heat Death of the Universe and Other Stories*, McPherson & Co., 1988, pp. 13-28.

Course Calendar


The schedule below focuses on Primary Texts and Assignments. Each week's learning module will also contain video lectures and some short secondary texts (usually excerpts from essays or study guides for various topics). In addition to the primary texts, you are responsible to view the lectures and read all of the secondary material each week; most of the assignments will require understanding of the secondary texts as well as the primary texts to complete.


| Dates | Week | Topics and Primary Readings | Assignments & Meetings |
|---------------------|------|--|---|
| Sept 10- Sept 17 | 1 | Module 1: Welcome, Course Orientation, Backgrounds Syllabus Rudyard Kipling, "The Mark of the Beast" Sarah Orne Jewett, "A White Heron" Jack London, "To Build a Fire" Eric Walrond, "The Wharf Rats" | Sept 10, 10:00 am New Learning Module Released |
| | | | Sept 15, 10:00 am <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Post 1 Due |
| | | | Sept 16, 10:00 am <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Post 2 Due |
| Sept 17- Sept 24 | 2 | Module 2: Modernity's Ghosts M. R. James, "Oh, Whistle, and I'll Come For You, My Lad" Henry James, "The Jolly Corner" [Read both assigned stories and use some time this week to browse weeks 5-12 and skim a few stories from those weeks to help develop your topic ideas] | Sept 17, 10:00 am New Learning Module Released |
| | | | Sept 22, 10:00 am <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Post 1 Due |
| | | | Sept 23, 10:00 am <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Post 2 Due |
| Sept 24- Oct 1 | 3 | Module 3: Modernism and Style Henry James, "The Jolly Corner" (cont'd) Virginia Woolf, "The Searchlight" Virginia Woolf, "A Mark on the Wall" Ernest Hemingway, "Hills Like White Elephants" | Sept 24, 10:00 am New Learning Module Released |
| | | | Sept 29, 10:00 am <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Post 1 Due |
| | | | Sept 30, 10:00 am <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Post 2 Due |
| Oct 1- Oct 8 | 4 | Module 4: Modernism and the Black Atlantic W. E. B. Du Bois, "The Comet" Zora Neale Hurston, "Sweat" Eric Walrond, "The Wharf Rats" James Baldwin, "The Outing" | Oct 1, 10:00 am New Learning Module Released |
| | | | Oct 6, 10:00 am <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Post 1 Due |
| | | | Oct 7, 10:00 am <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Post 2 Due |
| | | | Oct 8, 10:00 a.m. <input type="checkbox"/> Assignment 1 Due |
| Oct 8- Oct 15 | 5 | Module 5: Surrealism and Magical Realism André Breton and Phillipe Soupault, "White Gloves" Aimé Césaire, from "Notebook of a Return to the Native Land" Franz Kafka, "The City Coat of Arms" Jorge Luis Borges, "The House of Asterion" Gabriel García Márquez, "A Very Old Man With Enormous Wings" Gabriel García Márquez, "The Last Voyage of the Ghost Ship" | Oct 8, 10:00 am New Learning Module Released |
| | | | Oct 13, 10:00 am <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Post 1 Due |
| | | | Oct 14, 10:00 am <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Post 2 Due |
| Oct 15- Oct 22 | 6 | Module 6: Postmodernism, Postmodernity, Late Capitalism, and Science Fiction Donald Barthelme, "The Balloon" J. G. Ballard, "The Drowned Giant" John Barth, "Lost in the Funhouse" Ray Bradbury, "There Shall Come Soft Rains" J. G. Ballard, "Billennium" William Gibson, "Burning Chrome" Don DeLillo, "Human Moments in World War III" | Oct 15, 10:00 am New Learning Module Released |
| | | | Oct 20, 10:00 am <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Post 1 Due |
| | | | Oct 21, 10:00 am <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Post 2 Due |
| Fall Break | | | |

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|--------------------|----|--|--|
| [Oct 22-] Nov 5 | 7 | Module 7: Postmodern and Ecological Feminisms Pamela Zoline, "The Heat Death of the Universe" Margaret Atwood, "Happy Endings" Angela Carter, "The Tyger's Bride" Pat Murphy, "Rachel in Love" | Oct 22, 10:00 am New Learning Module Released Nov 3, 10:00 am <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Post 1 Due Nov 4, 10:00 am <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Post 2 Due Nov 5, 10:00 a.m. <input type="checkbox"/> Assignment 2 Due |
| Nov 5- Nov 12 | 8 | Module 8: Navigating the "Post-" in "Postcolonial" Chinua Achebe, "Dead Men's Path" Thomas King, "Borders" Pius Adesanmi, "Oota" Jamaica Kincaid, "On Seeing England for the First Time" Jamaica Kincaid, "At the Bottom of the River" | Nov 5, 10:00 am New Learning Module Released Nov 10, 10:00 am <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Post 1 Due Nov 11, 10:00 am <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Post 2 Due |
| Nov 12- Nov 19 | 9 | Module 9: Diaspora and Globalization Bharati Mukherjee, "The World According to Hsü" Salman Rushdie, "Chekov and Zulu" Dionne Brand, "I Used to Like the Dallas Cowboys" Leila Aboulela, "The Museum" | Nov 12, 10:00 am New Learning Module Released Nov 17, 10:00 am <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Post 1 Due Nov 18, 10:00 am <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Post 2 Due |
| Nov 19- Nov 26 | 10 | Module 10: Afrofuturism and Indigenous Science Fiction Octavia Butler, "Bloodchild" Octavia Butler, "The Book of Martha" Nnedi Okorafor, "Mother of Invention" Eden Robinson, "Terminal Avenue" Rebecca Roanhorse, "Welcome to Your Authentic Indian Experience" | Nov 19, 10:00 am New Learning Module Released Nov 24, 10:00 am <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Post 1 Due Nov 25, 10:00 am <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Post 2 Due |
| Nov 26- Dec 3 | 11 | Module 11: Post-Postmodernisms David Foster Wallace, "Little Expressionless Animals" Nafissa Thompson-Spires, "Whisper to a Scream" Zadie Smith, "Now More Than Ever" Nana Kwame Adjei-Brenyah, "The Era" | Nov 26, 10:00 am New Learning Module Released Dec 1, 10:00 am <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Post 1 Due Dec 2, 10:00 am <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Post 2 Due Dec 3 10:00 a.m. <input type="checkbox"/> Assignment 3 Due (requires double submission) |
| Dec 3- Dec 10 | 12 | Module 12: Discussion of Student Anthologies Student Anthologies on cuPortfolio | Dec 3, 10:00 am New Learning Module Released Dec 8, 10:00 am <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Post Due Dec 10, 10:00 am <input type="checkbox"/> Assignment 4 Due |

What will a regular week in our course look like?

Thursdays, 10:00 a.m. EST

 **New Learning Module released:** Each module contains readings, video lectures, and any activity or assignment instructions for the coming week. Choose 2-3 primary readings and watch all of the lectures. Read all of supplementary materials posted that week.

 **Discussion Forum for the week opens:** Each week I will open one new Discussion Forum with several Discussion Topics dealing with texts we are reading that week. Over the course of each week, you must make a minimum of TWO contributions to one or more of these Discussion Topics (more are welcome; see details below about post requirements).

👋 **Weekly “Questions About This Week’s Lectures or Readings” Forum opens:** Any questions that arise about the texts or lectures that are not focally part of the week’s Forum Discussion Topics should be posted on the Questions thread for that week.

Tuesdays 10:00 a.m. EST

🔔 Discussion Forum contribution #1 Due

Your first reply of 75-125 words can either be a direct response to one of the forum’s discussion topics or a response to another class member’s comment on one of the discussion topics.

Tuesdays 10:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. EST

Virtual Office Hours on Big Blue Button

By appointment or just drop in. Please send me an email to set up a meeting.

Wednesdays 10:00 a.m. EST

🔔 Discussion Forum contribution #2 Due

Your second reply of 75-125 words should be a response to another poster’s comment, a later contribution to the discussion you are already participating in, or a comment on a different discussion.

Time Management & Working Ahead

On average, expect to do about 3-4 hours of reading and 3-4 hours of writing, discussing, and research per week in this class. If you find that you have extra time on your hands and want to work ahead, the best thing you can do is dip into the Course Library on cuLearn (where all of the term’s readings are grouped by week) and read ahead.

Evaluation & Assignments

Assignments

| Due Date | Time | Assignment | Value |
|--------------------------|-------------|---|--------------|
| weekly | see below | Discussion Forum Participation | 40% |
| ANTHOLOGY PROJECT | | | |
| Oct 8 | 10:00 am | Assignment 1: Topic Proposal, Process Notes, and Practice Excerpt with Headnote and Annotations | 10% |
| Nov 5 | 10:00 am | Assignment 2: Topic Research Backgrounds Paper and New Excerpt with Headnote and Annotations | 10% |
| Dec 3 | 10:00 am | Assignment 3: Anthology Project Due | 35% |
| Dec 10 | 10:00 am | Assignment 4: Reflection on Student Anthologies | 5% |

FINAL GRADES 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.

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/>

FORMATTING AND CITATION Papers should be typed/printed double-spaced using a 12 pt Times font or equivalent with a 1” margin on all sides of the page. Also, remember to keep backup copies of your papers. Please use MLA (Modern Language Association) documentation style. For examples, see: https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/mla_style/mla_style_introduction.html.

LATE PENALTY Due to the extraordinary circumstance of this year’s Covid-19 pandemic, I am waiving my normal late penalty of -3% per day. Nevertheless, I do expect assignments to be submitted on time. Late assignments have a grace period of 1 week, but they will not be returned as promptly and will receive less written feedback. Penalties for assignments that are more than 1 week late will be adjudicated on a case-by-case basis, but may be as high as -15% to the assignment’s numerical grade.

Detailed Descriptions of Assignments

Weekly Discussion Forums

Length: 75-125 words x 2 replies per week (best 10 of 12 weeks); note that week 12 requires 1 longer reply rather than 2 shorter ones

Posting Deadlines: 1st post: 10:00 a.m. Tuesday, 2nd post: 10:00 a.m. Wednesday

Value: 40% of final course grade

Due: weekly (12 weeks, but you are allowed to miss 1 week without penalty)

Submission Method: post as replies to topics in the weekly discussion forum

The Role of Discussion Forums in the Course: Because we will not be meeting in person and because there is no final exam in this class, the Discussion Forums will be extremely important to your learning and to your final grade. First and foremost, this is where we will talk about the texts and push beyond the material presented in the lectures. Beyond this, however, think of these boards as an ongoing, process-oriented (as opposed to product-oriented) assessment. Rather than testing what you remember or have synthesized at the end of the term (the way an exam would), the discussion forums will track your ongoing engagement with the course material. Your mark for this part of the course will thus reflect the consistency and quality of your engagement with the texts, with the discussion questions, and with each other

throughout the term. Your posts do not have to show total mastery of all the nuances of a text you are commenting on; they have to show that you have shown up to talk seriously about that text and to contribute meaningfully to our discussion about it (see Grading Rubrics for Discussion Forums below).

How Replying to Discussion Topics Works

Between the release of the new learning module on Thursday at 10:00 a.m. and the release of the next module the following Thursday, you will participate in online discussion via message boards on the course's cuLearn site. To get the discussion started, I will open each week's forum with (usually) 3 discussion topics, each of which groups 1-3 of that week's texts for discussion and comparison. Remember to consult these groupings before you choose what you want to read for that week. My expectation is that you will contribute a minimum of TWO non-consecutive replies (of 75-125 words each) per week for a total of TEN weeks to ANY of the discussion topics opened on a given week. Please do not begin new discussion topics; if you have questions that are not addressed by the conversations taking place in those threads, please post them to the Questions About This Week's Lectures or Readings forum. There are posting deadlines of Tuesday and Wednesday at 10:00 a.m. to help keep the discussion on track and avoid a last-minute pile-up, but please do begin replying to the discussion topics as soon as you have completed the learning module. At least one of your two weekly replies must acknowledge something someone else in your discussion thread has said OR must be a post on a second discussion topic (and different text) for that week. You are of course welcome to reply more frequently than this and in as many of the weekly discussion topics as you like, but note that only your first two replies will be graded. Regardless of whether you comment directly on other class members' comments or not, every reply you make should be geared towards advancing the conversation in some way. For example:

- adding a new idea or new example
- commenting on another poster's observations
- arguing a counterpoint
- reinterpreting the discussion question
- summing up what has been said and then proposing a new direction for the discussion

The key to writing good replies is to read the whole thread before you post and then think about how your own reactions to the text could contribute something that builds upon or opens up the discussion already taking place.

Questions About Primary Texts and Lectures: Each Learning Module will contain a new Questions About This Week's Lectures or Readings forum. If you are puzzled about something I said in a lecture or just have a general question about a text that does not seem to fit with the forum discussion, post it here rather than emailing me. Chances are, someone else is wondering the same thing. I will answer these periodically throughout the week. Before posting your question, please check through the Questions forum for that week and make sure that your question hasn't already been asked and answered.

Discussion Forums Language Statement

Reading and Talking (Online) About Difficult Texts

I recognize that some of the primary texts we encounter this term make for uncomfortable reading and will engender strong feelings, either because they grapple with—and ask readers to grapple with—difficult material or because they uncritically reproduce ideas or language that are ideologically pernicious. Some texts do both of these things at once. As scholars and cultural critics we cannot avoid the violence or messiness of history that is embedded in primary texts from earlier eras (or, for that matter, our own); it is vital that we understand the complexities and contradictions through which such texts operate, even as we study and learn from works that offer more immediately affirming visions and perspectives.

Nonetheless, I am mindful of the real harms that tacitly or explicitly belittling, dehumanizing, delegitimizing language produces. In order to ensure that our online forums are genuinely inclusive spaces of discussion and exchange, no racist, sexist, ableist, classist, ageist, homophobic, transphobic slurs will be permitted under any circumstances. This also applies when quoting from primary texts. If a comment you are making requires you to quote from a section of the text that uses offensive language, please omit that word or phrase, using a few dashes [----] or some other notation signaling the alteration. I recognize the challenge this poses. Often, offensive language is obvious—but not always. Some of us—myself included—will inevitably make mistakes. I welcome your feedback if I steer us wrong or blunder. When blunders happen, I will address them. Mistakes are also opportunities to learn, and my hope is that we will all learn together and help each other learn in a spirit of mutual generosity and respect. If offensive language appears in a forum post, the post will immediately be removed or edited by the moderator and I will contact the poster directly to remind them of course expectations around inclusivity, collegiality, and forum conduct.

Grading Rubric for Discussion Forums

A = Posts are thoughtful, on time, and well-written. They engage the text(s) and prompt(s) in meaningful ways, often advancing the discussion. Posts demonstrate an awareness of what others have contributed and an ability to respond productively and respectfully to the contributions of others.

B = Posts are well-written, usually on time, and engage meaningfully with the text(s) and discussion prompt(s). Posts contribute to the evolving group discussion, but could sometimes do more to connect with the contributions of others.

C = Posts are sometimes late, sometimes missing or incomplete, and/or could stand to engage more substantively with the text(s) and discussion prompt(s). They typically add some observations and ideas into the discussion, but too often simply restate ideas that have been made in previous posts. Posts could do more to connect with the contributions of others.

D = Posts offer some ideas but are incomplete, chronically late, sometimes off-topic, engage superficially with the text(s) and discussion prompt(s), and/or largely repeat ideas that have been made in previous posts. Little evidence of engagement with other posts on the thread beyond the repetition of ideas.

F = Posts generally indicate little effort to engage with the spirit of the assignment.

ANTHOLOGY PROJECT

Overview

Over the course of the term, in addition to the weekly readings, video lectures, and message board discussions, you will do a series of smaller assignments that all ultimately converge in a larger term project: the development of your own personalized *Anthology of Literatures and Cultures 1900-Now*, tailored and organized around a topic of your choosing.

The project's requirements are described in detail below. Before you read through the details, however, you might find it helpful to browse through the [Sample Anthology, *Imagining the Animal: Literatures and Cultures 1900-Now*](#), which will give you an idea of what such a term project might look like.

Anthology Project Requirements

Your anthology must contain the following:

An organizing topic that you will choose as the focus of your anthology. This could be an idea (eg. the discontents of new technologies), a general or philosophical or sociological category (eg. the animal), an aesthetic concept (eg. the sublime), an identity-category (eg. Muslim-American), a genre or mode (eg. Gothic), a period of literary or cultural history (eg. modernism), an aesthetic orientation or style (eg. realism), etc. Most likely, the most interesting topics will be those that combine two or more of these. You will likely not be in a position to choose a topic until about a month into the class, and that's to be expected. Deciding on a topic for your anthology will probably feel a bit like deciding on the finer points of a thesis statement: you won't really know if something is going to work until you have started writing the paper--or in this case, started assembling and thinking about at least some of your anthology selections. Assignment #1 (below) provides detailed advice on how to get started.

A Title Page that gives the full title of your anthology, your name (Edited by _____), and the date of submission.

A Table of Contents that lists the pages for the Introduction, each excerpt, Postscript, and Bibliography.

An Introduction of 1000-1250 words in which you explain your anthology's premise and elaborate on the significance or development of your topic within the twentieth and/or twenty-first century. This Introduction should also give a small preview of the anthology's contents and explain your rationale for selecting the texts you have chosen to feature.

A total of FIVE excerpts of roughly 500-1000 words (each from a different primary source) that showcase some aspect of your anthology's topic.

- A minimum of THREE of these sources must be primary texts studied in class.
- The remaining TWO choices are "free" in the sense that they may be taken either from primary class texts or from other texts you have read or studied. Note that if your anthology includes texts not studied in class, these texts can be from other media (film, comics, visual art, poetry, drama, etc.). Texts from other media do not need to obey the word limit, but a rough guideline would be to include 2-3 pages of images (see examples in the [Sample Anthology](#)).

- Note that excerpts can contain ellipses. That is, you may extract more than one section of a single work, separating non-continuous section with ellipses (see the Jack London example in the sample anthology).

Headnotes for each excerpt (roughly 200-300 words each) that identify the author, title of the work, year of publication, and provide any information that you deem necessary for a reader to possess in order to understand the reading. For example, since you will be providing excerpts, it will likely be necessary to provide a very brief sketch of the story's general plot or meaning as well as any details of the story that clarify ambiguous elements of the excerpt. You will also want to briefly characterize the significance of the excerpt with respect to your anthology's topic. See Sample Anthology for examples.

Annotations for each excerpt (3-4 notes of 2-4 sentences each) that offer interpretive guidance to readers by further specifying how key elements of the excerpt (sentences, words, images, figurative language, etc.), illustrate or complicate the excerpt's treatment of your anthology's theme.

An Afterword of 350-500 words in which you reflect on what your anthology demonstrates about your topic and/or why you find this topic an important one to think about.

A Works Cited list in MLA Style of all the primary and secondary sources cited in the anthology's excerpts, Introduction, Headnotes, Annotations, and Afterword.

Working in Stages

This is obviously not the kind of project that can be completed all at once at the last-minute. To help you navigate it, the course breaks the final project into smaller manageable tasks that you will complete throughout the term. Each of these tasks will be a graded assignment that contributes to the project's final shape.

Student Anthology Project Language Statement

The Discussion Forums practice of replacing offensive words with dashes or some other marker to indicate an omission does not apply to the excerpts for the student Anthology Project. Because the Anthology Project is by its nature a historicist project that models itself on actual critical anthologies, excerpts should be reproduced exactly as they are in the original text. These Anthologies will be shared with the class on December 3 when they are posted as pdf files on the Student Anthologies Discussion Forum. Since up to TWO excerpts in each anthology can be from texts not studied in class (which would likely be new to most other students), I will ask students to signal the presence of offensive language or triggering material (such as graphic violence, sexual violence, abuse, self-harm, or suicide) in their excerpts in their Student Anthologies forum posting with the following sentence: "One or more of the excerpts in this anthology contains offensive language or deals with triggering material." If you wish to specify the nature of the offensive language or material, please do so—obviously without using that language in your own post. Students who do not wish to encounter that language or material will then be free to avoid it if they so choose.

Anthology Assignment #1: Provisional Topic and Annotated Excerpt

Length: see details below

Value: 10% of final course grade

Due: Oct 8, 10:00 a.m.

Submission Method: cuLearn

Submission Format: Word (.doc or .docx); please put everything in ONE Word file rather than submitting multiple files

Instructions: Submit the following, using the “How to Brainstorm and Choose a Provisional Topic” and “What Makes for a Good Topic” advice below:

- (i) a 40-50 word **statement of your provisional topic** (you are not committed to this topic forever; you can change it later if you don't like it or simply get excited about something else) and a **tentative list of 2-3 course texts and/or non-course texts** that could form the basis of anthology excerpts on this topic
- (ii) one 500-1000 word **excerpt** that you have selected from one class text. (If you change topics later in the term you may end up not using this excerpt in your final anthology at all; that is to be expected—treat this excerpt as practice towards understanding the format of the project.)
- (iii) a 200-300 word **headnote** introducing the excerpt that identifies the author, title of the work, year of publication and any information that you deem necessary for a reader to possess in order to understand the excerpt (for example, you will want to include a statement about the general plot and meaning of the work from which it is taken and probably some plot or character details that will help to contextualize the excerpt as well).
- (iv) **3-4 footnotes** of 2-4 sentences for the excerpt, each of which offers interpretive guidance to readers by further specifying how key elements of the excerpt (sentences, words, images, figurative language, etc.), illustrate or distinguish the excerpt's treatment of your anthology's topic.

How to Brainstorm and Choose a Provisional Topic: Choosing a topic will be an ongoing process, and you will no doubt change your mind or modify your original idea a few times as you wrestle with which texts and which selections will work best as a total grouping within the anthology you are designing. That is why, for this assignment, I am only asking you to choose a **provisional** topic—i.e. a possible topic, one that will probably change after receiving some feedback and developing your ideas over the course of several months. **You can change your topic at any time throughout the term.** Becoming comfortable with revising your original idea and making adjustments—sometimes drastic ones—is an essential part of developing a strong, interesting project. Here is a method for figuring out your provisional topic:

1. **Use the Topics Worksheet** (see cuLearn) throughout the term to track some of the topics explored in the lectures, online discussions, and in your own reading. As you notice new topics emerging, add these to the worksheet. Think about how you could combine topics to create a more specific focus. (See “What Makes a Good Topic” below.)
2. **Browse ahead through the syllabus**, especially to the material we will be studying in the second half of term, after Fall Break. Use the weekly topic descriptions in the syllabus to guide you. Read a few stories from weeks 5-11 that catch your eye. If you have a question about any of the stories that are coming up in weeks 5-11, just ask. Glancing ahead this way will give you a feel for what is coming later in the course and could help you make a more informed topic choice in September or early October. (There will definitely be connections to discover between texts from the first half of the course and the latter half.)

3. **Take notes on topics that emerge in each story** as you read for class and skim ahead. Keep adding to these notes. Think about the stories and the issues they engage in a comparative way. Which stories deal with similar topics? How do they differ in their treatment of a particular topic? Why? Do some stories pair certain topics together? What is the effect of the pairing of topics? Etc. These are just some questions to get you thinking.

What Makes a Good Topic? A good topic for a project like this is broad enough that it allows you to bring diverse texts into conversation, while still being specific enough to allow you to explore the topic (and to compare the excerpts you find) in meaningful depth—it is a balancing act. There are basically two approaches to topic choice: **broad** and **narrow**. Both are acceptable, and each has its own advantages and disadvantages. You will have to choose which of these approaches works best for the kind of work you want your anthology to do:

1. **Broad Topics** “The animal” is a broad topic. I chose “the animal” for the Sample Anthology because I wanted to be able to quickly show you a diverse set of examples—after all, there are texts containing animals in *every* literary period and genre. You *could* choose a topic as broad as this if you like and produce an excellent anthology that draws examples from across the twentieth century—a modernist text, a postcolonial text, a postmodernist text, etc. You can already see how an approach like this would require you to explain many different contexts (modernism, postcolonialism, postmodernism, etc.) in the anthology’s introduction and headnotes. This kind of approach is great if what you want to do is trace large differences between the manifestation of your topic across different periods or aesthetic movements—it will make for a lively and exciting anthology. The downside of this approach is that it tends to invite generalizations because of the way that one text will often stand in for a whole period’s treatment of the topic. For example, Jack London’s dog is a revealing example of how literary “naturalism” deals with animals, but it is not the only example. It would be possible to do a whole anthology on “The Animal in Literary Naturalism” and discover all kinds of things about how animals were treated by authors of that movement that remain obscured by an anthology like mine that generalizes about the animal in literary naturalism from the Jack London example in “To Build a Fire” alone. This problem is not insurmountable. But it can only be addressed if you are aware of it, so if you do decide on a broad topic like this, think about how to bring nuance and specificity to your treatment of examples.
2. **Narrow Topics** Qualifying your core topic (eg. “the animal”) by adding a temporal or contextual qualification has certain advantages, making it easier to explore the topic in a narrower, more historically particular or fine-grained way. For example, I could have focused my anthology on modernist animals, or animals in surrealism and magic realism, or for that matter, I could have narrowed the core topic itself by focussing entirely on birds—or done both and focused on birds in postcolonial writing (there are a surprising amount of examples of this!). Any of these topics would have helped give my anthology an intriguing, meaningful focus. It would allow you to make more subtle comparisons between texts when pulling them all together in the introduction and conclusion, and would drive more nuanced close reading—all good things. The disadvantage to a narrower topic in the context of this course is that it will likely require more initiative on your part to locate enough texts to excerpt. If you are excited about a narrower focus but are finding that the course readings do not fully support it, get in touch with me and we can discuss strategies for making it work: there may be course texts on the horizon that will be a great fit for it, or there may be course texts that address it in ways you have not yet noticed. I may also be able to suggest alternative texts that are not on the syllabus if you are really stuck.

Statement of your Topic and List of Potential Anthology Texts: Explain your topic as clearly as possible in 40-50 words. What is it? What makes it interesting? What are its features? What concerns does it address? Why do you think it might be a useful window into literature and culture since 1900? You don't have to answer all of these questions, but do think about them. Following your statement about the topic, provide a tentative list of 2-3 works that you are considering for inclusion in an anthology based on your tentative topic. These may be works on the syllabus OR works from other classes or your own interests OR both.

Selecting and Annotating an Excerpt: Choose ONE story from the first four weeks of class pertaining to your provisional topic and excerpt a portion of the story that is approximately 500-1000 words. If you prefer, you can choose 2-3 shorter excerpts that total 500-1000 words (see the Jack London example in the Sample Anthology). When deciding what part of the story to excerpt, select a section (or sections) that allow you to comment on the things about the story's treatment of your topic that you feel are most important. Write a **headnote** of 200-300 words to introduce your selection; then, **annotate** the excerpt with 3-4 explanatory footnotes of 2-4 sentences each. Explanatory footnotes can provide additional factual information about the story, but (for the purpose of this assignment) they must also do more than this. They should either interpret the story (commenting on what the footnoted part of the excerpt means with respect to the anthology's focus) OR provide additional information about context, followed by an explanation of how this context helps us understand the passage better with respect to the anthology's focus. See the footnotes in the Sample Anthology for examples of what I mean. For this assignment, include a **Works Cited** list that contains (1) the publication information of the excerpt and (2) any secondary sources that you make use of in your own annotations. (In your final anthology, all of your sources will be cited in one collective Works Cited list at the end, so keep careful track of these as you work on your annotated excerpts throughout the term.)

Assignment #2: Background Research and Second Excerpt

Length: 850-1000 word report (see below) + ONE new annotated excerpt (with 200-300 word headnote, 3-4 annotations of 2-4 sentences each, and a Works Cited list)

Value: 10% of final course grade

Due: Nov 5, 10:00 a.m.

Submission Method: cuLearn

Submission Format: Word (.doc, .docx)

Instructions: By this point in the term, you should have a pretty clear idea of your topic and have chosen about half of the primary texts you plan to excerpt. You should also be starting to develop a critical narrative about these texts. What story do these texts begin to tell about your topic? The purpose of this assignment is to get you started on the background research you will need for the critical introduction you will include in your completed anthology. **For this assignment:** use the library databases to find TWO credible scholarly sources about your topic. These should be journal articles or chapters in scholarly books. Write a short report (850-1000 words) that (i) summarizes the main claims these sources make about your topic and (ii) discusses how you think these sources could be useful as part of the framing of your topic and critical narrative in your anthology's Introduction. Spend about 75% of the report summarizing the two sources, and the remaining 25% reflecting on how they are useful to your thinking about your topic and the critical narrative your excerpts are beginning to develop. Note that this report is not the same thing as the Introduction you have to write for the completed Anthology. However, what you learn in this assignment will likely inform that Introduction when you go to write it later in the term.

Assignment #3: Completed Anthology

Length: see “Anthology Project Requirements” (above)

Value: 35% of final course grade

Due: Dec 3, 10:00 a.m. It is very important that your Circulation Draft be submitted on time, as it will form the basis for the coming week’s reflections and discussion (Assignment #4).

Submission Method: Student Anthology Discussion Forum (for sharing) AND as a regular assignment submission on cuLearn (for grading) ****Make sure you submit it to BOTH places****

Submission Format on Discussion Forum: .pdf

Submission Format via cuLearn for grading: Word (.doc, .docx)

Instructions: Building off the work you have already done in Assignments #1 and #2, bring your Anthology together, carefully following the “Anthology Project Requirements” section of the syllabus and using the Sample Anthology as a guide.

Content Warning for posting your anthology to the forums: If any of your Anthology excerpts contain offensive language (as is sometimes inevitable when excerpting older works or contemporary works dealing with difficult topics) or triggering material (such as graphic violence, sexual violence, abuse, self-harm, or suicide), I ask that you include the following note in the post linking to your Anthology so that students who do not wish to encounter that material may avoid it if they so choose: “One or more of the excerpts in this anthology contains offensive language or deals with triggering material.”

Assignment #4: Reflection on Student Anthologies

Length: 450-500 words

Value: 5% of final course grade

Due: Dec 10 by 10:00 a.m

Instructions: Your final assignment of the term is to browse the posted student anthologies and to carefully read any TWO of them. Then, write a reflection on what you have learned through the process of creating your own anthology and reading other students’ anthologies. “What you learned” can be interpreted in many different ways, and any one of these would make a sound basis for reflection. It might mean that you reflect on what you have learned about the course topic (Literature and Cultures 1900-Now), or it might mean that you reflect on what this process of excerpting, annotating, researching, reading, comparing, synthesizing, etc., has taught you as a scholar. Whatever direction your reflection takes, the most important criteria is that it demonstrate a serious engagement with the work of other students as well as an ability to reflect critically on your *own* work and learning.

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

Please contact your instructor 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 contact your instructor 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

If you have a documented disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) at 613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation or contact your PMC coordinator to send your instructor your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term. You must also contact the PMC 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 your instructor as soon as possible to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. For more details, visit the Paul Menton Centre Website: carleton.ca/pmc

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 its 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 must be provided to students who compete or perform at the national or international level. Please contact your instructor 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>