

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

**ENGL 3910A: DEGREE TO CAREER**  
**(ONLINE)**

Prerequisites: second-year standing or permission from the department

**Days and Times:** Tuesdays and Thursdays, 4:05 pm -5:25 pm

**Location:** Big Blue Button on CU Learn Course Page  
(all lectures and discussions will be recorded)

**Format:** Synchronous with recorded sessions

**Instructor:** Professor D. Dragunoiu

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**Office Hours:**

on demand by appointment

In its February 2018 report, the Conference Board of Canada states that most holders of social-sciences and humanities degrees “go on to a wide range of rewarding careers.” Still, in the short term these same graduates face challenging career transitions because they have trouble “articulating the value of skills” developed during their degrees. This course is designed to provide English and other Arts and Humanities majors and minors with career clarity and a sense of collective possibility when it comes to navigating the transition from degree to career. Like other courses that convene under the rubric of “experiential learning,” the course will enable students to explore different career-related experiences while learning how they can leverage their degrees for paid work.

The aim of this course is not simply to help students find a *job*. Rather, it is a course designed to help students embark upon a meaningful and rewarding *career* that harmonizes with their temperaments, inclinations, and aspirations. Students will conduct a number of exercises that will shed light on what kind of work is best suited for their personality traits and personal circumstances. These exercises will help students identify their strengths and weaknesses, fears and ambitions, and group their findings into a constellation of careers they imagine being happy pursuing in the future.

The course will also prepare students to apply for the jobs that will lead to their desired careers, and it will do so by teaching them how to speak eloquently and effectively about what it means to have an English degree. The two culminating projects for the course, the CU Portfolio and the Ignite Talk, will enable students to “hit the ground running” as soon as they are ready to enter the job market. Working in close conjunction with specialists

from Carleton's Career Services Office, students will produce a "forward facing" CU Portfolio that is not only public and portable, but it will also articulate with confidence and authority the work-related skills that students acquired during their degrees. Additionally, students will be assisted in producing an Ignite Presentation about themselves, namely a PowerPoint presentation in which candidates present a number of slides about themselves in a quick, memorable, and informative way. (The Ignite Presentation will receive feedback from the instructor and members of the class.) Other assignments will include establishing contact with people working in a field of interest and arranging for a "job shadowing" day or two "informational interviews" with them.

Although fieldwork and the sharing of "trade secrets" will be a key component of the course, the course will also contain a series of classes that teach "best practices" for applying to graduate programs, professional schools (such as Law School, Teachers College, or Library Science), and interdisciplinary degrees such as "Narrative Medicine." We will also hear from guest speakers who have successfully parlayed their English degrees into unexpected careers or who have found a working balance between a "pragmatic" career and an artistic one.

In this online course, we will seek to replicate as close as possible a traditional face-to-face classroom experience. Therefore, the course will consist of *synchronous* lectures, discussions, and workshops that will take place on the Big Blue Button during the formally scheduled times of the course. These lectures and discussions will be recorded on the course page in CU Learn for students to watch on their own time should they be unable to attend a particular session or sessions. These recordings will remain accessible to students for the duration of the course. Though students will have the option of watching these recordings on their own time, my hope is that they will make a good-faith effort to be part of the scheduled sessions of the course. The communal nature of this course is intended to serve as an antidote to pandemic loneliness and to reproduce—if only virtually—the camaraderie and intellectual give-and-take of a traditional classroom. Office hours will take place on Big Blue Button on demand by appointment.

This course could not have existed without the generous support and mentorship of Dr. Janet Mantler, Associate Professor in the Department of Psychology at Carleton University. As an auditor of Professor Mantler's "PSYCH 3802: Transition to Career," I was inspired by the many ways she has channeled her scholarly expertise into productive pedagogical practice. I am deeply indebted to Professor Mantler and I like to think that this course is an heir to her significant pedagogical legacy.

### **Learning Outcomes**

This course is designed with the following learning outcomes in mind. By the time students complete the course, they will be expected to have achieved the following:

#### **Personal and professional transitions**

1. Be comfortable with personal and professional transitions.

2. Be familiar with the psychology of transitions and navigate them with confidence and authority.

### **Self-knowledge**

1. Develop a holistic understanding of themselves by acknowledging personal strengths and weaknesses, fears and aspirations, capabilities and limitations.
2. Match this self-knowledge onto existing careers in order to gain career clarity and purpose.

### **Workplace Skills and Tools**

1. Prepare and be ready to put to effective use language and documentation that highlights the workplace skills gained during the English degree.
2. Be ready to apply for jobs with a suite of documents that articulate clearly and eloquently skills and competencies (a résumé, a portfolio, a letter of intent, an Ignite presentation)
3. Be familiar with codes of conduct relating to interviews, on-the-job etiquette, and correspondence protocols.

### **Career Management**

1. Take the long view when envisioning one's career over a lifetime of work.
2. Learn about parallel careers and double lives that wed professions to aspirations in a harmonious, mutually satisfying way.

### **Resources:**

Dear English Major: <http://www.dearenglishmajor.com>

after/words Project: <https://afterwordsproject.com/>

Ignite Talks: <http://www.ignitetalks.io>

### **Research Tools from Carleton's Career Services:**

Learn about potential careers of interests!

- Your Degree, Your Future
- Career Cruising (Login – Carleton, Password – University) provides you sample career profiles to learn more about professions, educational requirements and gain access to many other resources regarding careers of interest
- O\*NET is an American database of occupational information on skills, abilities, knowledge, work activities, and interests associated with 900 occupations. Includes My Next Move : a streamlined application for students and job seekers
- Ontario Job Futures is developed for use as a resource to help people exploring career choices including employment outlook
- Career Options Magazine provides information to assisting students in the transition from post-secondary education to careers
- The National Occupational Classification Titles (NOC) is a Canadian database that provides a standardized language to identify and describe job titles

- Review LinkedIn profiles of professionals who work in a field of interest - what education do they have, what does their job entail, previous work experiences, skills etc.?

## Work Schedule

Thursday, Sep 10	<p>Introduction to the transition from “degree to career”  <b>Description of Assignment 4: cuPortfolio and Résumé</b>  <b>Description of Assignment 5: Job Shadowing or Informational Interviews</b>  <b>Description of Assignment 7: Record of Correspondence</b>  <b>Description of Bonus Assignment: Alumni Testimonial</b></p>
Tuesday, Sep 15	<p>TRANSITIONS:  Read in advance <u>“Bridges’ Transition Model”</u> and  <b>Description of Assignment 1: Navigating Transitions.</b>  Come to class prepared to discuss a life-changing transition in your life in a breakout group.</p>
Thursday, Sep 17	<p>Navigating Transitions with guest speaker Scott Kuehn, Senior Associate, Dentons.</p>
Tuesday, Sep 22	<p>KNOW THYSELF (Part I)  <u>Markus and Nurius. “Possible Selves.” <i>American Psychologist</i> 41 (1986): 954-69.</u> <b>Assignment 1 due.</b>  <b>Description of Assignment 2: Who Am I?</b></p>
Wednesday, Sep 23	<p><b>Last day of registration for fall-term and fall/winter courses.</b></p>
Thursday, Sep 24	<p>KNOW THYSELF (PART II): Your Twenties: The Defining Decade of Your Life  Psychologist Meg Jay, <u>“Why 30 Is Not the New 20”</u>  a) Build your identity capital  b) Use your “weak ties”  c) Build your “family” now</p>
Tuesday, Sep 29	<p>KNOW THYSELF (Part III): Self-assessment tools: TypeFocus and the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator.  Guest Speaker Yvonne Collins from CU Career Services.</p>
Wednesday, Sep 30	<p><b>Last day to withdraw from fall-term courses and fall/winter courses with a full fee adjustment</b></p>

- Thursday, Oct 1 Working while pursuing graduate studies with guest speaker Mary Giles, Special Projects Administrator at Carleton's School of Public Policy & Administration. **Assignment 2 due.**
- Tuesday, Oct 6 Bangerter, Corvalan, and Cavin. "Storytelling in the selection interview? How applicants respond to past behavior questions." *Journal of Business and Psychology* 29 (2014): 593-604. **Description of Assignment 3: Articulating Skills and Aptitudes through Storytelling**
- Thursday, Oct 8 Ralston, Kirkwood, and Burant, "Helping Interviewees Tell Their Stories." *Business Communication Quarterly* 66.3 (2003): 8-22.
- Tuesday, Oct 13 Applying for Graduate School with guest speaker Hannah Skrypnik (BA Carleton, MA. English University of Toronto)
- Thursday, Oct 15 How to Apply to Graduate School: Letters of Reference, Letter of Intent, Networking in advance with prospective mentors and supervisors
- Tuesday, Oct 20 The Historical Perspective: Alain de Botton, ["The Ever Changing World of Work"](#)
- Thursday, Oct 22 Articulating Transferrable Skills: ["Want Innovative Thinking? Hire from the Humanities,"](#) Tony Golsby-Smith, *Harvard Business Review*, March 31, 2011. ["Branding Essentials for the English Major,"](#) Alyssa W. Christensen.
- OCTOBER 26-30 FALL BREAK—UNIVERSITY CLOSED**
- Tuesday, Nov 3 Language-ing Skills (Part I): What did you learn during your English degree? **Assignment 5 due.**
- Thursday, Nov 5 Language-ing Skills (Part II): What did you learn during your English degree?
- Tuesday, Nov 10 Presentation and critique of **Assignment 3** (presentations can be either oral, taped, or submitted in writing).
- Thursday, Nov 12 Presentation and critique of **Assignment 3** (presentations can be either oral, taped, or submitted in writing).

<b>Friday, Nov 13</b>	<b>Last day to submit Formal Examination Accommodation Forms for December examinations to the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities</b>
Tuesday, Nov 17	Presentation and critique of <b>Assignment 3</b> (presentations can be either oral, taped, or submitted in writing). <b>Assignment 4 due.</b>
Thursday, Nov 19	Workplace Skills and Competencies
Tuesday, Nov 24	Selling Yourself: Résumés, Cover Letters, Interviews and Negotiations
Thursday, Nov 26	Salary, Negotiations, and how to Leave a Job Gracefully
Tuesday, Dec 1	The English Degree and your 'Dream' Career <b>Assignment 7 due.</b>
Thursday, Dec 3	Presentations and Critiques of <u>Ignite</u> Presentations <b>Bonus assignment due.</b>
Tuesday, Dec 8	Presentations and Critiques of <u>Ignite</u> Presentations
Thursday, Dec 10	Presentations and Critiques of <u>Ignite</u> Presentations

**Terms of Evaluation:** There are no essays or exams in this course. The assignments are designed, first, to assist students in determining which careers are best suited for their temperaments and aspirations, and, second, to manage their careers over a lifetime.

<b>Assignment 1:</b> Navigating transitions	5%
<b>Assignment 2:</b> Self-exploration e-portfolio	10%
<b>Assignment 3:</b> Describing competencies through storytelling	10%
<b>Assignment 4:</b> cuPortfolio and résumé	20%
<b>Assignment 5:</b> Job shadowing or informational interviews	20%
<b>Assignment 6:</b> Reflections on presentations by guest speakers	10%
<b>Assignment 7:</b> Record of correspondence	5%
<b>Assignment 8:</b> Ignite talk	20%
<b>Bonus Assignment:</b> Testimonial from alumni	10%

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.

## **General Guidelines for Student Conduct**

Having taught an online course during the COVID-19 pandemic, I know first-hand that some students do not have access to cameras or microphones. Additionally, some students have important obligations that make it impossible for them to be part of our classroom sessions. As a result, students who cannot join us during our synchronous class sessions are exempt from doing so. Because all class sessions will be recorded, they will be able to watch the sessions on their own time. All other students, however, are expected to be in class on a regular basis to listen to lectures and participate in class discussions. Being together during the formally scheduled sessions will give us an opportunity to replicate as closely as possible a traditional classroom experience. This involves seeing each other, listening to each other, and examining a text in all of its complexities during the natural give-and-take of scholarly discussion. Discussions will be conducted in an atmosphere of respect and goodwill towards all members of the class and towards all races, ethnicities, religious affiliations and gender identities.

## **Submitting assignments:**

All assignments must be submitted online through CULearn or CUPortfolio (as noted in the assignments instructions). A penalty of 2%/per day (including Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays) will be applied to late assignments. If submitting assignments late, students are encouraged to contact me with an explanation. The deadlines are listed on the work schedule; all deadlines are implicitly at midnight of the specified date.

## **Readings:**

I have provided links for all required readings for the course (see under “Work Schedule” above). If a reading is assigned for a particular class, students are expected to arrive to class having read the article and be prepared to discuss it.

## **CULearn:**

All information relevant to this course will be posted in advance on our course CULearn page. Students are expected to consult this page frequently and to keep abreast of assignments, deadlines, and all notifications related to the course. Needless to say, students are expected to check their Carleton email boxes with regularity.

## **Email Communication and Office Hours:**

My aim is to respond to student emails within 48 hours of receiving them. If you do not hear back from me within this time period, please resend your email to me. All emails should be sent from your Carleton email accounts as directed by CU policy.

Because of the online nature of this course, I will hold office hours by demand. Please request an “office hour” by email and we will meet one-on-one on the Big Blue Button as

soon as we can find a mutually convenient time to do so.

## GRADING SYSTEM

Letter grades assigned in this course will have the following percentage equivalents:

A+ = 90-100	B+ = 77-79	C+ = 67-69
A = 85-89	B = 73-76	C = 63-66
A - = 80-84	B - = 70-72	C - = 60-62
D+ = 57-59	D = 53-56	D - = 50-52
F	Failure. No academic credit.	

## **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/>



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>