

Carleton University  
Winter 2021  
Department of English

ENGL 4115 D/5901W: Culture and the Text/Selected Topic in English Studies  
Prerequisite(s): fourth-year standing or permission of the department.

### **READING SELVES**

Tuesdays, 11:30—2:30

Location: Online

Format: Synchronous

Instructor: Prof. Robin Norris

Email: robin.norris@carleton.ca

Phone: 613-520-2600 x4195

Office Hours: by appointment

## **TENTATIVE COURSE OUTLINE**

### **Course description**

The original plan for this seminar was a team-taught, hands-on experiential learning opportunity in the book arts lab. For better or for worse, due to COVID, the seminar has been radically revisioned, and we are moving on to Plan B. Perhaps you were interested in a book arts seminar because you love reading but wanted to get out of your head. If so, this course is for you. This is a student-centred capstone experience for advanced readers that takes a holistic view of the student as self. In Winter 2021, you the reader will become the text, and the culture in question is the changing environment in which you find yourself reading. There will be opportunities for creativity, collaboration, prioritization of process over content, application of learning beyond the classroom, and experiential approaches to reading and writing. We will discuss and apply several new interdisciplinary ideas about narrative, the purposes of reading, self-understanding, and human language and cognition. Sensory and kinetic experiences of text may include reading aloud, listening to text, writing by hand, memorizing a poem, and creating artifacts of self as reader in a variety of contexts. Students may also choose to (re)examine key texts such as: the first book you remember reading, the last novel you enjoyed, a book you've been meaning to read, representations of reading, two versions of a beloved text, the arts that have sustained you during the pandemic, a text that has stayed with you from your career as an English student.

### **Learning outcomes**

To situate the self as reader in a variety of contexts.

To articulate the reader's own identity, history, and values.

To cultivate an awareness of the relationship between process and content.

To become aware of mental health and its impact on the reader's experience (e.g., focus, procrastination, perfectionism, imposter syndrome).

To experience various modes of learning about literature (e.g., affective, auditory, oral, analytical, kinetic, experiential, creative).

To problematize authenticity, idealism, myths of origin, and the divide between high culture and popular culture in a variety of historical contexts.

To learn new perspectives on narrative, the purposes of reading, self-understanding, and human language and cognition, and to apply these new ideas outside of the classroom.

**Texts may include the following:**

Maria Dahvana Headley, *Beowulf*

Robin Wall Kimmerer, *Braiding Sweetgrass*

Madeline Miller, *Circe*

E. B. White, *Charlotte's Web*

*Secondary sources will be made available online so that we can discuss ideas and more importantly their application*

Erich Auerbach, "Figura"

St. Augustine, *De Doctrina Christiana*

Temple Grandin, *Animals Make Us Human* (Jaak Panksepp, *The Archaeology of Mind*)

Stephen C. Hayes, Relational Frame Theory

Rudolf Otto, *The Idea of the Holy*

Szlemko, William J., et al, "Territorial Markings as a Predictor of Driver Aggression and Road Rage," *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* 38.6 (2008) 1664–88.

**The class will meet online via Zoom from 11:30–2:30 on these twelve Tuesdays.**

January 12: SEEKING, Szlemko, Course outline

January 19: Madeline Miller, *Circe*, or the last novel you enjoyed reading

January 26: St. Augustine, *De Doctrina Christiana*

February 2: E. B. White, *Charlotte's Web*, or the first book you remember reading

February 9: Erich Auerbach, "Figura"

**February 23: Artifact of self as reader**

March 2: Steven C. Hayes, Relational Frame Theory

March 9: Maria Dahvana Headley, *Beowulf*

**March 23: Artifact of the discipline**

March 30: Rudolf Otto, *The Idea of the Holy*

April 6: Robin Wall Kimmerer, *Braiding Sweetgrass*, or a book you have been meaning to read

**April 13: Artifact of the course**

**Evaluation**

Each student will create three artifacts. These artifacts will be the organic outgrowth of seeds planted in class. These artifacts may include an art project (in any medium), personal reflection on an activity related to the course, journal entries, audio recording, documentary video, blog/social media post, seminar presentation, oral exam, interview, survey, facilitation of an in-class activity, comparative analysis of adaptations, experiment with transmission, etc. In total, these three projects should be equivalent to a formal research paper (20+ pages in MLA format). These will be presented in class on the dates noted above: February 23, March 23, and April 13.

Artifacts will also be shared electronically as necessary. April 14 is the last day to submit term work. No work will be accepted after this date. Each artifact is worth one third of the course mark.

One third of each artifact mark will be based on attendance, preparation, and participation in class during the relevant meetings. Participation requires awareness: students must check their Carleton email accounts and the course CULearn site regularly, keep in touch with Prof. Norris, and attend meetings as requested.

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.

### **Statement on 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/>

The university’s Academic Integrity Policy can be found at: <https://carleton.ca/secretariat/wp-content/uploads/Academic-Integrity-Policy.pdf>

## Requests for Academic Accommodation

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

**Pregnancy obligation:** write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details click [here](#).

**Religious obligation:** write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details click [here](#).

**Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:** The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520- 6608 or [pmc@carleton.ca](mailto:pmc@carleton.ca) for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send me your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (if applicable). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the PMC website for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (if applicable).

### Survivors of Sexual Violence

As a community, Carleton University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working and living environment where sexual violence will not be tolerated, and where survivors are supported through academic accommodations as per Carleton's Sexual Violence Policy. For more information about the services available at the university and to obtain information about sexual violence and/or support, visit: <https://carleton.ca/equity/sexual-assault-support-services>

### Accommodation for Student Activities

Carleton University recognizes the substantial benefits, both to the individual student and for the university, that result from a student participating in activities beyond the classroom experience. Reasonable accommodation must be provided to students who compete or perform at the national or international level. Write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. <https://carleton.ca/senate/wp-content/uploads/Accommodation-for-Student-Activities-1.pdf>