

Carleton University  
Early Summer (May/June) 2021  
Department of English

ENGL 4115 A /5900 S: Culture and the Text/Selected Topic in English Studies

### **READING SELVES**

ENGL 4115 Prerequisite(s): fourth-year standing or permission of the department.

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 11:30—2:30

Location: Online

Format: Synchronous

Instructor: Prof. Robin Norris

robin.norris@carleton.ca

Student Partner: Megan Strahl

MeganStrahl@cmail.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. Here the reader will become the text, and the culture in question is the changing environment in which one finds the reader. 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. 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, a favourite poem, a book you've been meaning to read, representations of reading, the arts that have sustained you during the pandemic, or 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.

**Required Texts:**

*Beowulf* (any version but I will write to the class with recommendations)

Larry Thompson, Carleton University Book Arts Lab online resources

The Oxford English Dictionary online

**The class will meet online via Zoom from 11:30–2:30 on Tuesdays and Thursdays. The link will be posted on Brightspace. The order and/or dates of the units presented below is subject to change.**

May 6: Opening

May 11/13 • Unit 1: Making Ideas Your Own

You will need to identify an idea from your English studies that has stayed with you and become applicable outside the classroom. Please come prepared to share this idea and its significance in your own words, and bring the text in question to share if possible.

May 18/20 • Unit 2: Making Texts Your Own

You will need to choose a poem and bring it to class in a shareable version.

May 25/27 • Unit 3: Constructing *Beowulf*

You will need to have a translation of *Beowulf*. Before class you will need to have read the entire poem and you will need to identify a section of the poem for further investigation.

June 1/3 • Unit 4: Making the Book

You will need to access the online resources provided by CUBAL. In order to complete the suggested activities, you will need to gather the required materials.

June 8/10 • Unit 5: Making English

You will need to access the OED online during class in order to complete exercises using the dictionary.

June 15: Closing

**Evaluation**

Traditionally a seminar like this requires a formal research paper (20+ pages in MLA format). For those who do not wish to follow that route, each student will complete two artifacts that grow out of the seeds planted in class; each will be accompanied by a reflection essay. These artifacts may include an art project (in any medium), activity related to the course, audio recording, documentary video, blog/social media post, seminar presentation, oral exam, interview, survey, facilitation of an in-class activity, experiment with transmission, etc. In total, these two artifacts and the accompanying essays should comprise the equivalent of 20 pages of formal writing. Each student will be asked to report on their progress in class. No work will be accepted after June 15.

Some suggestions for artifacts include:

- Explain the significance of an idea that has stayed with you from your training in English
- Memorize and perform a beloved poem or create a handwritten or artistic version
- Write a personal literacy narrative
- Compare two classmates' versions of one section of *Beowulf* to (re)construct an original
- Compile the class's *Beowulf* extracts to (re)construct a full narrative poem
- Write a page of the *Beowulf* manuscript by hand
- Conduct one of the experiential learning exercises based on the CUBAL resources
- Explore the Oxford English Dictionary and report what you learned

The two artifacts are each worth one third of the course mark. The final third of the course mark will be based on attendance, preparation, and participation in class. Participation requires awareness: students must check their Carleton email accounts and the course CULearn site regularly, keep in touch with Megan and 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>