

**Carleton University**  
**Summer 2017 (July/August)**  
**Department of English**

ENGL 4115C: Culture and the Text / ENGL 5900T: Selected Topics in English Studies I  
(Prerequisite for ENGL 4115C: fourth year standing in Honours English)

Topic:  
**Literature and Neoliberalism**

Time: Tues / Thurs 11:35-2:25  
Location: Richcraft 3220 (confirm on Carleton Central)

Instructor: Sarah Brouillette  
Email: sarah\_brouillette@carleton.ca  
Office: DT 1904

**Outline:**

This course will have two emphases. First, we will develop a basic understanding of definitions of neoliberalism. We will focus especially on the relationship between neoliberal government measures (“reforms”) and global economic transformation. Second, we will consider how scholars have been thinking about the relationships between neoliberalism and culture/literature. Topics for focused attention will include: periodizing neoliberalism (is it over now?); neoliberal conceptions of the self; theories of “human capital” and the quantified self; the creative economy; financialization and indebtedness; and therapeutic discourse, including “wellbeing” and “mindfulness.”

**Readings:**

- Haven Books has copies of Thomas McCarthy’s *Remainder* and *10:04* by Ben Lerner
- all other readings are available via cuLearn

**Method of Evaluation:**

- 15%: Students will be expected to participate in class discussion in an informed way.
- 25%: Students will on one occasion lead class discussion by giving a presentation and posing discussion questions.
- 60%: Undergraduate students will write a 12-15 page paper; graduate students will write a 15-20 page paper. Due 22 August (one week after our last class).

**Accommodations:**

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

**Pregnancy:** 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 see the Student Guide.

**Religion:** 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 see the Student Guide.

**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*). Requests made within two weeks will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the PMC website ([www.carleton.ca/pmc](http://www.carleton.ca/pmc)) for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (*if applicable*).

### **Plagiarism:**

The University Senate defines plagiarism as “presenting, whether intentional 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 serious offence, which 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 a final grade of “F” for the course.

## Schedule:

4 July / Introduction to course

6 July / Introduction to neoliberalism I

- David Harvey, from *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*, pp. 1-38
- Mark Fisher, from *Capitalist Reason*, pp. 1-38
- Michel Foucault, from *The Birth of Biopolitics*, pp. 215-238.

11 July / Introduction to neoliberalism 2

- David McNally, "From Financial Crisis to World-Slump: Accumulation, Financialisation, and the Global Slowdown"
- Robert Brenner, from *The Economics of Global Turbulence*, pp. xix-xxix, 1-9

13 July / Introduction to neoliberalism 3

- Endnotes, "Misery and Debt"
- Endnotes, "A History of Separation" (skim whole thing; read from "Strange Victory")
- Joshua Clover, "Surplus Rebellions"

17 July / Neoliberalism and the creative class

- Mark Banks, "Fit and Working Again: The Instrumental Leisure of the Creative Class"
- Jamie Peck, "Struggling with the Creative Class"
- Marina Vishmidt, "Everyone has a business inside them"

19 July / Neoliberalism and racialization

- Walter Benn Michaels, "Against Diversity"
- Adolph Reed, Jr., "*Django Unchained*, or, *The Help*: How 'Cultural Politics' Is Worse Than No Politics at All, and Why"
- Chris Chen, "The Limit Point of Capitalist Equality"

24 July / Further on the neoliberal subject

- Moira Weigel, "Fitted"
- Wendy Brown, "Neoliberalized Knowledge"
- Michel Feher, "Self-Appreciation: or, The Aspirations of Human Capital"

26 July: NO CLASS

1 August / Neoliberalism and gendering

- Hannah Black, "You Are Too Much"
- Nancy Fraser, "Contradictions of Capital and Care"
- Endnotes, "The Logic of Gender"

3 August / Financialization and debt

- Midnight Notes Collective, "Introduction to the New Enclosures"
- Annie McClanahan, "Serious Crises: Rethinking the Neoliberal Subject"
- Joshua Clover, "Autumn of the System: Poetry and Financial Capital"

8 August / Ben Lerner, *10:04*

10 August / Tom McCarthy, *Remainder*

15 August / Poetry

- Joshua Clover & Juliana Spahr, *#Misanthropocene: 25 Theses*
- Catherine Wagner, "My New Job"
- Wendy Trevino, *Brazilian is Not a Race*