

**Carleton University
Winter 2020
Department of English**

ENGL 4961A: *Indigenous Literatures II*

Prerequisites: 4th-year standing

Some background in English studies is strongly recommended for students who are not English Majors

Precludes additional credit for ENGL 4808 and ENGL 4809 (no longer offered).

Wednesdays 8:35-11:25 am

Location: *Please confirm location on Carleton Central*

Instructor: Dr M. S. Birkwood

Email: susan.birkwood@carleton.ca

Office: DT 1928

Phone: 613-520-2600 ext. 2302—*but e-mail is better*

Office Hours: Wednesdays and Thursdays 1:30-3:00 pm or by appointment

Carleton University is located on the traditional and unceded territory of the Algonquin Anishinaabe Nation.

Course Description:

In the Foreword to *This Place: 150 Years Retold*, Alicia Elliott writes,

“I have never liked the phrase, ‘History is written by the victors.’ I understand the idea behind it—that those in power will tell and retell stories in whatever ways flatter them best, until those stories harden into something called ‘history.’ But just because stories are unwritten for a time, it doesn’t mean they’ll be unwritten forever. And just because stories don’t get written down, it doesn’t mean they’re ever lost. We carry them in our minds, our hearts, our very bones. We honour them by passing them on, letting them live on in others, too.”

This course will focus on texts by Indigenous writers from Turtle Island all too familiar with the damage done by settler-colonial histories *and* fictions—including the genre of the Western—who point to the fact, as Elliott does, that Indigenous peoples “all live in a post-apocalyptic world,” but who wish to “[plant] each story like a seed. . . .”

Required Texts:

- *Books have been ordered at **Haven Books**, 43 Seneca Street, Ottawa (at Sunnyside, one block from campus): <https://www.havenbooks.ca/>*

Thomas King, *Green Grass, Running Water*

Jordan Abel, *Injun*

Katherena Vermette, *River Woman*

This Place: 150 Years Retold (Portage and Main)

Evaluation:

Seminar on course text	
(oral presentation [20%], plus written reflection [5%])	25%
2 written analyses * (10% x 2)	20%
<i>(*You may not write an analysis of the course text that is the subject of your seminar presentation. You have the option of submitting a third analysis for bonus marks.)</i>	
Reflection on CUAG visit	10%
Peer support activities	5%
Participation (attendance is mandatory)	10%
Research Essay	30%

Opportunities for bonus marks outside of class:

- ✓ Receive one 2% addition to your **final grade** for attending / viewing one of the following:
 - Gerald Vizenor's talk on Wed., Mar. 25 (Details forthcoming)
 - Munro Beattie Lecture: Seth Presents "Inkwell's End" on Sat., Mar. 21 (See the English Department website for details: <https://carleton.ca/english/cu-events/2019-20-munro-beattie-lecture/>)
 - Àbadakone | Continuous Fire | Feu continuel at the National Gallery of Canada (admission is free Thursdays from 5-8 pm)
 - A cultural or academic event related—if tangentially—to aspects of the course. (Just check in with me about your choice.)
- ❖ *You must submit a 250-word description of the event and provide proof of attendance (ticket, selfie at the event, etc., or if I'm at the same event, get me to make note of your presence) to receive the bonus marks.*

Please note:

- ❖ You must complete all of the term work to be eligible to pass the course.
- ❖ I will grade hard copies only of written assignments, unless otherwise indicated; however, I ask that you submit electronic back-up copies through cuLearn of your analyses and essays.

- ❖ There are policies in place to support students who require academic accommodation. (See the section on accommodations.) Should you, though, find yourself in circumstances that threaten to preclude your successful completion of an assignment, please contact me before the particular deadline. I would much rather work with you to find a solution than have you face the possibility of failing the course.

“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.” (FASS Teaching Regulations)

Requests for 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>

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 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 are expected to know the University’s policy and procedures regarding **plagiarism**. (See the explanation above and the section on “Academic Integrity” in the University Calendar.) Unacceptable paraphrasing does count as a form of plagiarism. Be particularly careful in your use and documentation of internet sources. I shall report cases of unacknowledged use of sources to the Chair of the English Department.

General Policy on Written Assignments (The assignment sheet for the research paper will outline specific expectations)

Requests for extensions MUST be made BEFORE the due date. Busier-than-average schedules or computer problems do not ordinarily constitute good reasons for extensions. A penalty of 5% per business day will be applied to late assignments.

- You will be required to submit print copies of your written assignments for marking and to provide electronic back-ups in cuLearn. However, you should still keep a copy of each assignment until the original has been returned, and be prepared to submit a copy immediately if need be.
- Please do not slide assignments under my office door. There is a drop-off slot outside of the English Department office (DT 1812).
- You are expected to know the University's policy and procedures regarding plagiarism. (See the section on "Academic Integrity Standards" in the University Calendar.) Unacceptable paraphrasing does count as a form of plagiarism. Be particularly careful in your use and documentation of internet sources. I shall report cases of unacknowledged use of sources to the Chair of the English Department.
- Essays are to conform to MLA format. Errors in documentation and formatting will cost you marks.

Seminar Presentations:

Length: approx. 30-35 minutes

- This time period can include a discussion component, but your portion should be a minimum of 20 minutes.
- Include some discussion of your research process and influential sources. (It's up to you how / when you incorporate this.)
- Do watch your time. I may have to stop you at 40 minutes.

Further Requirements:

- The week prior to the presentation: A statement of topic and brief outline of what your main concerns will be in the seminar. (You may simply tell me what you are planning to do, or you may e-mail me.) I will then post the information in cuLearn.
- *On the day of the presentation:*
 - A copy of your Works Cited list made available in print or electronic form for each class member. (I can facilitate the distribution of the electronic list.)
 - A copy of your seminar notes and Works Cited to hand in to me.
- *One week after the presentation:* A one-page reflection on the seminar experience (worth 5% of the final grade).

Topics: Choose one from the list of topics, or formulate your own in consultation with me. Please keep the following guidelines in mind as you prepare your seminar presentations. They relate to aspects of the presentations that will be evaluated.

- Thesis: Formulate a thesis for the seminar and integrate any background information or description into your overall argument.

- **Clarity:** Clearly introduce the topic and do your best to demonstrate a clear understanding of the material. Introduce secondary sources that you use—with a signal phrase, at least.
- **Organisation:** Organise your seminar in a coherent manner, with clear transitions and connections between parts.
- **Research:** There is an expectation that, in addition to your own primary analysis of the text in question, you will incorporate the results of research into the contexts of the work or will integrate some material from scholarly secondary sources to support your argument.
- **Interest:** Present your material in a manner that reflects your interest and holds the listeners' interest. (Eye contact with the audience is important.)
- **Concision:** Make sure that you work effectively within the time constraints.
- **Audio/Visual component:** Let me know ahead of time if you want to use the classroom computer. Just make sure that you have easy access to your presentation on the day of your seminar.
- **Acknowledgement of sources and Works Cited list:** All primary and secondary sources should be acknowledged during the seminar—this includes photo credits.
- **Facilitation of discussion.**

Participation and Peer-Support Components:

- **Attendance:** Absence from 2 or more classes may result in a participation grade of 0, unless you are able to provide supporting documentation.
- **Active participation in discussion**
- **Questions for presenters:** I encourage you to formulate questions for individual presenters. I will post presenters' seminar topics in cuLearn, so you can think of potential questions once you see the individual topics. I do make note of who asks questions during discussion as part of my record of participation.
- **Peer evaluations of presentations:** 5% of seminar grades will be based on the peer evaluations. I will supply forms, and I will read the evaluations and remove the evaluators' names prior to giving the presenter the evaluations. I ask that you phrase your assessments in a constructive and supportive way. I will remove any evaluation that is objectionable from the set that I give to the presenter, and the author will not be given participation credit for the evaluation. I would like everyone to get roughly the same number of evaluations for their seminars.

Written Analyses (of required course texts):

Length: approx. 4 pages (typed, double-spaced, 12-point font) *Quotations do not figure in this count.

Subject matter: You may NOT write one of the analyses on the text that is the subject of your seminar presentation. Otherwise, it is up to you to decide which two of the remaining texts* that you want to write on, but I strongly recommend that you submit one analysis before Reading Week.) Choose from the list of topics, write on an aspect of an up-coming seminar, or consult with me about your own topic. *The stories in *150 Years Retold* count as separate texts.

Due: Analyses are due during the weeks in which we are scheduled to study the respective works. **You will receive a 2% bonus for each written analysis you submit during the first of the classes on the particular novel.

- *Bonus: If you write three analyses, then I will take the best two and add bonus marks as follows for the third: 1% for a grade of 70% or higher or 2% for 80% or higher to the overall close-reading assignment grade (20% of the final grade). [e.g. 2 @ 80% = 16/20 + 1 analysis @ 70% = 17/20 (85%)]*
- These short analyses are meant to be original work. Please do not consult published or internet commentaries on the texts in question for these short analyses. If you do need to look something up, make sure that you document any sources cited or consulted. You should include specific, documented references to the texts in question to support your points, using the MLA format for punctuating and documenting quotations.
- Analyses should have a clear thesis and be grammatically correct. (Get to the point quickly; don't waste time on vague preamble.)

Research Essay (I will distribute a separate assignment sheet later in the term)

Length: approx. 12 pages. Indented quotations do not figure in this count.

Subject matter: any of the novels other than the one on which you presented for your seminar, unless you wish to engage in a comparison / contrast of your seminar text and another course text.

E-mail Communications:

- I will check e-mail daily during the week. If you send a message on Friday evening, be aware that I may not reply to it until Monday morning.
- I will delete mail without opening it, if it comes from a sender I do not recognise, so please use your Carleton account.
- University policy prohibits me from sending information about grades over e-mail if the request comes from any non-Carleton e-mail address.
- It is always a good idea to avoid excessive informality in your e-mail communications with instructors. ("Dear Professor –" is the safest way to begin when e-mailing any instructor.)

Classroom Courtesy:

- Please put mobile phones into silent mode before coming into class and keep them out of your view. **IF** you have a pressing need to consult your phone—e.g. you have a child in daycare—I will of course accommodate this need.
- Please do not use your electronic devices for anything other than course-related work. You won't be the only one distracted by your Instagram feed.
- Please plan to stay for the duration of the class. Should you need to leave the classroom early, I would appreciate your letting me know ahead of time, if possible.

Class Schedule:

*Subject to change if necessary. I will make suggestions for further reading along the way.

Dates	Readings / Activities
Jan. 8	Introduction to course, seminar sign-up <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • View Indigenous Learning Bundle: <i>Indigenous Environmental Relations</i> on your own, and we will discuss it next week • Recommended: Daniel Heath Justice, Introduction. <i>Why Indigenous Literatures Matter</i>. pp. 2-32. (ARES—e-book also available through MacOdrum Library) (https://www.cbc.ca/player/play/1244693059891)
15	Brian Maracle: "The First Words" (ARES) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • also in Sugars and Moss, eds. <i>Canadian Literature in English: Texts and Contexts</i>. Vol. 1, pp. 1-13. (if you used this text in ENGL 2802) • Originally published in Our Story: Aboriginal Voices on Canada's Past. Robin Kimmerer, "Sky Woman Falling" in <i>Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teachings of Plants</i> (ARES—e-book also available through MacOdrum Library) Thomas King, <i>Green Grass, Running Water</i>
22	Thomas King, <i>Green Grass, Running Water</i>
29	Thomas King, <i>Green Grass, Running Water</i> Daniel Heath Justice, "How Do We Behave as Good Relatives?" <i>Why Indigenous Literatures Matter</i> (ARES) Jordan Abel, <i>Injun</i>
Feb. 5	Jordan Abel, <i>Injun</i>
12	Leanne Simpson, "Embodied Resurgent Practice and Coded Disruption," <i>As We Have Always Done</i> Katherena Vermette, <i>River Woman</i>
19	READING WEEK: no class
26	Katherena Vermette, <i>River Woman</i>
Mar. 4	Katherena Vermette, <i>This River</i> (film) 10:05 am: CUAG visit for a guided tour of the exhibition <i>They Forgot That We Were Seeds</i> , curated by Kosisochukwu Nnebe

11	Daniel Heath Justice, "How Do We Become Good Ancestors?" <i>Why Indigenous Literatures Matter</i> <i>This Place: 150 Years Retold</i> (selections TBA)
18	<i>This Place: 150 Years Retold</i> (selections TBA)
25	<i>This Place: 150 Years Retold</i> (selections TBA)
April 1	<i>We'll use this time as needed—whether for another seminar, wrap up, or essay discussion</i>
	The final paper will be due on the last day of classes for the term, April 7