

**Carleton University\***  
**Fall 2016**  
**Department of English**

**ENGL 4961A: Indigenous Literatures II**  
**Indigenous Restorying and Resurgence:**  
**Popular Genres and Performance Cultures**

Precludes additional credit for ENGL 4808 and ENGL 4809 (no longer offered)  
Prerequisite(s): fourth-year standing in Honours English

**Tuesday 11:35-2:25**  
**1816 Dunton Tower**

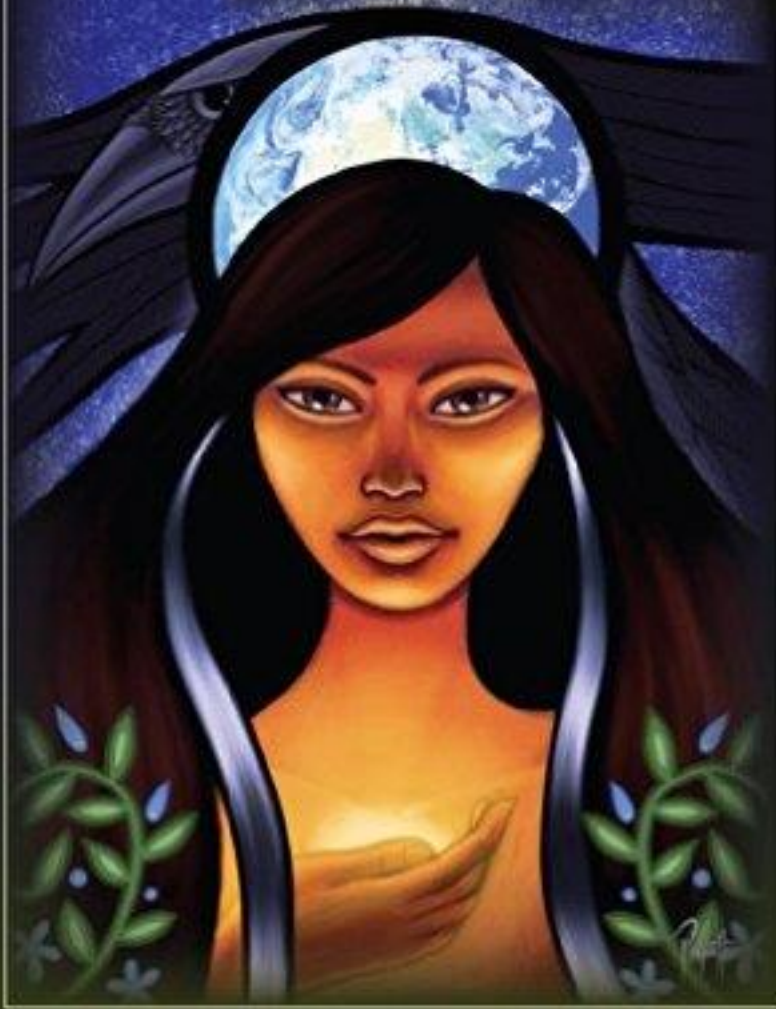
**Instructor: Brenda Vellino**  
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**Office: DT 1815**  
**Phone: 613-520-2600 x2321**  
Office Hours: TBA

**\*On unceded Algonquin Territory**

**Course Description:** Contemporary Indigenous artists in Canada have increasingly taken up popular forms such as genre fiction (sci-fi, fantasy), graphic novels, television serial drama, Shakespeare adaptation, and spoken word in order to decolonize and re-appropriate cultural forms, represent complex contemporary social realities, stake political claims, and assert Indigenous cultural sovereignty and resurgence. Whenever possible, our discussion will be informed by Indigenous literary/cultural critics such as Niigaanwewidem James Sinclair, Deanna Reder, Daniel Heath Justice, Kristina Fagan, Margaret Kovach, and Kateri Akwenzi-Damm, as well as settler ally critics. Indigenous guest speakers, collaborative learning, and experiential education will be part of the framework of this seminar as we work through the texts and cultural performances together in a manner informed by Indigenous principles of respectful relationships, humility, honesty, and care for the whole person (physical, spiritual, emotional, and intellectual) in a holistic learning environment. This course will enable us to consider questions of the politics of cultural production and reception within the complex intersecting conditions of colonialism and decolonisation, always situated in specific First Nations cultural contexts, social realities, and priorities. Further topics may include contemporary Rez life, contemporary urban realities, Indigenous literary sovereignty, Indigenous ethics, Indigenous healing, rebalancing, revitalization and resurgence movements, and the politics of embodiment and Indigenous self-representation, particularly as these are informed by gender and sexuality.

# Lightfinder

Aaron Paquette



## Course Texts: Four Texts available at Haven Books\*

### \*Pick up Course Reader before first class!!

- Course Reader (CR)
- Aaron Paquette (Cree): *Lightfinder*. Kegedonce, 2014.
- David Alexander Robertson (Cree) and Scott B. Henderson. *Betty: The Helen Betty Osborne Story*. 2015.
- Kelly LaBoucane-Benson (Métis) and Kelly Mellings. *The Outside Circle*. Anansi (2015).

## Course Assignments

- 8 Weekly Critical Reflections\* (500 words, 5 marks each): Due Sept. 13, weekly, Oct., 18 Portfolio; Dec. 6 Portfolio 40%
- Seminar: 30 minutes with 10 minutes of discussion: 25%
- Final Research Project Proposal: Due: Nov. 1 5%
- Research Presentations: (750 word summary/preview) Due: Dec. 6: 5%
- Final Research/Creative/Educational Projects: Due Dec. 9: 25%

### \*See instructions for Critical Reflection Portfolio after Course Calendar

## Course Calendar

### Class 1: Sept. 13 –

Part I: Guest Elder: Opening Remarks– one hour

Part II: Grounding Concepts Discussion: two hours

### Critical Reflection Entry #1 Due in Class on the three essays

#### Essays for first class:

- Margaret Kovach. “Situating Self, Culture, and Purpose in Indigenous Inquiry.” *Learn. Teach. Challenge: Approaching Indigenous Literatures*. Ed. Deanna Reder and Linda Morra. Wilfred Laurier P, 2016. (CR)
- Niigaanwiwedim James Sinclair. “Responsible and Ethical Criticism of Indigenous Literature.” *Learn. Teach. Challenge: Approaching Indigenous Literatures*. Ed. Deanna Reder and Linda Morra. Wilfred Laurier P, 2016. (CR)
- Kristina Fagan et al. “Canadian Indian Literary Nationalism?: Critical Approaches in Canadian Indigenous Contexts- A Collaborative Interlogue.” *Canadian Journal of Native Studies* XXIX. 1& 2(2009): 19-44:  
<http://www.deannareder.com/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/Canadian-Indian-Literary-Nationalism-2009FINAL.pdf>

**Class 2: Sept. 20: Indigenous Speculative and Science Fiction:**

- Grace L. Dillon (Anishinaabe): "Imagining Indigenous Futurisms" - *Walking the Clouds: An Anthology of Indigenous Science Fiction* (2012) – (CR)
- Eden Robinson (Haisla) story: "Terminal Avenue" - from *Walking The Clouds* (CR)
- Richard Van Camp (Dogrib): "On the Wings of this Prayer" - from *Godless but Loyal to Heaven* ((2013) - (CR)

**Class 3: Sept. 27: Indigenous Mythic Realism:**

- Sarah Henzi, "Betwixt and Between: Alternative Genres, Languages, and Identity." *Learn. Teach. Challenge: Approaching Indigenous Literatures*. Ed. Deanna Reder and Linda Morra. Wilfred Laurier P, 2016. (CR)
- Sean Tinsley and Rachel Qitsualik (Inuit). "The Qallupiluq Forgiven," from *Ajji: Dark Dreams of the Ancient Arctic* (2011). (CR)
- Danis Goulet (Cree-Metis): Wakening (Mythic Realist Film Short): <http://www.nsi-canada.ca/2015/01/wakening/>

**Class 4: Oct. 4: Indigenous Fantasy:**

- Aaron Paquette (Cree): *Lightfinder*. Kegedonce, 2014.
- Helen Young. "Intro." and "Popular Culture Postcolonialism." *Race and Popular Fantasy Literature* (2016). (CR)
- Paquette, "JK Rowling Lifts Indigenous Traditions but Ignores History": <http://ottawacitizen.com/opinion/columnists/paquette-j-k-rowling-lifts-indigenous-traditions-but-ignores-history>

**Class 5: Oct. 11: Indigenous Graphic Novel 1:**

- Benson & Mellings. *The Outside Circle*. (2015)
- Douglas Wolk: Excerpt from "Reading Comics: How Graphic Novels Work and What they Mean.": <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=91746247>
- Sarah Henzi, "Graphic Novels, Comics, and Indigenous Writing." *Canadian Review of Comparative Literature*. 43.1 (2016): available from Summon on library home page.

**Class 6: Oct. 18: Indigenous Graphic Novel 2:**

- David Alexander Robertson (Cree-Métis) and Scott B. Henderson. *Betty: The Helen Betty Osborne Story*. (2015).\*\*

**\*\*Trigger Warning:** One woman's story from among 1,700+ Indigenous Women, Missing & Murdered

- Robertson speech at launch of *Betty*: <http://www.darobertson.ca/betty-the-helen-betty-osborne-story-is-here/>
- Elizabeth La Pensee and Jonathon Thunder, *Deer Woman: A Vignette (digital comic online, 2015)*: <https://www.nativerealities.com/products/deer-woman-a-vignette>

**\*Critical Reflection Narratives # 1-5 Portfolio Due in Class**

**Break Week: Oct. 24-28**

**Class 7: Nov. 1: Decolonial Love, Indigenous Erotica, and Re-Embodiment:**

- Kateri Akwenzi Damm, "Erotica Indigenous Style." – from *Learn. Teach. Challenge: Approaching Indigenous Literatures*. Ed. Deanna Reder and Linda Morra. Wilfred Laurier P, 2016. (CR)
- "Indigenous Erotica Gives New Meaning to "All My Relations": <https://www.ualberta.ca/news-and-events/newsarticles/2016/february/indigenous-erotica-gives-new-meaning-to-all-my-relations>

\*from Kateri Akwenzi Damm, ed. *Without Reservation: Indigenous Erotica (2003)* anthology: (CR)

- Allootook Ipellie (Inuit): "Summit with Sedna, the Mother of Sea Beasts"
- Basil Johnston (Anishinaabe), "The Bear Walker Bear Walked"
- Linda Hogan (Chickasaw), "The Creations of Light and Water"
- Kateri Akwenzie-Damm (Anishinaabe), "the feast," "fish head soup," "love letter, not sent"
- Sherman Alexie (Spokane), "Powow Love Songs"
- Marcie Rendon (Anishinaabe), "Native Love"
- Joy Harjo (Mvskoke Tribe), "'Anniversary"
  
- Leanne Simpson (Anishnaabekwe) - story from *Islands of Decolonial Love* (CR)
  
- Richard Van Camp: Kiss Me Deadly, Healthy Aboriginal Network (digital online comic): <http://thehealthyaboriginal.net/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/Kiss-Me-Deadly.pdf>

**\*Research Project Proposal Due**

**Class 8: Nov. 8: Indigenous Two-Spirited Erotica and Re-Embodiment:**

- Sophie Mayer. “This Bridge of Two Backs: Making the Two-Spirit Erotics of Community.” *Studies in American Indian Literature*. 20.1 (2008): 1-26. Available from Project Muse, Carl library database.
- Gregory Scofield (Cree-Métis); poems from *Love Medicine and One Song* (CR)
- Beth Brant (Mohawk): “Coyote Learns a New Trick.” from *Mohawk Trail* (1985) (CR)
- Kent Monkman (Cree-Métis): Miss Chief Eagle Testickle Art: <http://www.kentmonkman.com/performance/>
- Billy-Rae Belcourt (Cree), “The Cree Word for a Body Like Mine is Weesageechak,” “Sacred,” and “Colonialism: A Love Story”: <https://nakinisowin.wordpress.com/2016/07/02/the-cree-word-for-a-body-like-mine-is-weesageechak/>

**Class 9: Nov. 15: Indigenous Shakespeare Adaptations: Yvette Nolan (Algonquin): *Death of a Chief*: (2006):**

[http://www.canadianshakespeares.ca/anthology/the\\_death\\_of\\_a\\_chief.pdf](http://www.canadianshakespeares.ca/anthology/the_death_of_a_chief.pdf)

\*Intro. article on the creation of *Death of a Chief*:

[http://www.canadianshakespeares.ca/a\\_thedeathofachief.cfm](http://www.canadianshakespeares.ca/a_thedeathofachief.cfm)

**Class 10: Nov. 22: Indigenous Serial TV Drama: First Four episodes from Blackstone Season 1.\*\***

**\*\*Trigger warning:** addictions, sexual violence, and suicide

- Intro. chapter – Jennifer David. *Original People, Original Television: The Launching of the Aboriginal People’s Television Network*. (2012): (CR)

**Class 11: Nov. 29: Indigenous Spoken Word Poetry:**

- Guest Speaker, Taqralik Partridge (Inuit): (one hour)
- Janet Rogers (Mohawk), “ Blood Moves With Us – Story Poetry Lives Inside.” In *Indigenous Poetics in Canada*. Ed. Neal McLeod. Wilfred Laurier P, 2014. **(CR)**
- Eekwol (Muskoday FN, Plains Cree), “Too Sick”:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0XuYikRUI7g>
- Janet Rogers, “Forever” from *Peace in Duress*:  
<http://talonbooks.com/books/peace-in-duress>
- <https://vimeo.com/109102225>
- Leanne Simpson: “Jiibaay”: <http://arpbooks.org/islands/>
- Rebecca Thomas (Mi’kmaq) – “What Am I Supposed to Think?”:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1BX0xCn8Hgw>
- Mary Black (Ojibwe) – “Quiet”:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mckR6TYKaVc>
- Moe Clark (Metis): “Namoya”: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-TO5ZFhO\\_YY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-TO5ZFhO_YY)
- **Class 12: Dec. 6: Final Class Potluck Feast & Research Sharing**
- Five minute Preliminary Presentations on Research Findings and/or Creative Research Final Projects (750 word summary/preview of final projects and/or research findings with 5 minutes of point form talking points: to hand in)
- **Critical Reflection Journal Portfolio: Entries 1-8, including Summative Reflection & Self-Assessment #8: Due in Class**

**Final Research Project Due Dec. 9 at midnight in English Dept. drop box (Contact Prof. to arrange for extensions as needed).**

## Critical Reflection Journal Entries Portfolio

**Critical Reflection Journal Entries:** In this seminar, intensive engagement and participation will be the norm. Your critical reflective writing will be a record of your reading, thoughtful participation, and active learning. The assignment invites you to pay attention to connections between theory, creative texts, prior learning, prior assumptions, and life experience.

There will be a number of “texts” to consider, including critical articles, creative works, guest presentations, and extracurricular Indigenous education or cultural events.

Each student should write a minimum of **eight** text, speaker and event response narratives, including at least **one** extra-curricular experience of participating outside of class in Indigenous cultural life and at least **five** responses to elements from the weekly critical and creative texts, including responses to readings from **week one**.

Your critical reflection journal entries will not be like formal essays, but should be thoughtfully written in response to several aspects of the material of the given week, and should reflect a critical awareness of the learning process. For instance, a good response statement might outline three elements of a critical article or creative text that provided insight for the student in the context of the course, mapping how these elements are important for your learning process. A strong response statement is not merely an opinion (i.e. "I liked this work because it made me laugh") but critically self-reflexive ("I found myself laughing at the stereotyped characters, so that made me think about how such devices work to undercut mainstream narratives..."). Taken all together in a portfolio, your critical reflections will allow you to actively and self-reflectively engage with your learning process and participation in this class.

“Your critical reflection journal entries should address not just what you have learned but how you've learned it. Consider: What were the key moments and turning points in your understanding of the subject area? A learning journal asks you to think about your learning process AS you write, so that you're drawing a map of your thought process in the midst of the process itself. A learning journal is thus a dynamic entity, subject to changes in direction and new insights over the weeks of the course.” (Adapted from Andrew Stubbs at the Student Academic Success Writing Centre, University of Regina).

### Due Dates:

- # 1: due in Class 1: **Sept. 13**
- #2-7 are due in class weekly, except for your seminar date.
- # 1-5 are due in your Writing Portfolio in Class 6: **Oct. 18**
- #1-8 are due in Class 12 in your Writing Portfolio, including # 8, your Summative Reflection on and self-assessment of your learning process: **Dec. 6**
- Weekly Peer Response Writing: In the first ten minutes of class, you will read and respond with marginal notes and a signed comment to a seminar mate’s critical reflection journal. This means that the Prof. is not the only audience for your reflections and that peer learning is an essential piece of collaborative learning.
- **#8: Summative Reflection:** This asks you to review all your reflection narratives and look for key themes/patterns/questions, assessing changes in thinking, new areas of learning, and offering a self-assessment of your learning, **along with a proposed grade** for the critical reflection journals portfolio.



**Format:** 500 words typed and double-spaced; reflections should be in the “I” voice as you take responsibility for your ideas, questions, assumptions, and values.

\***Creative forms of response are welcome** (poems, video, art) with a 1-2 paragraph reflection on the connection to the readings or experience.

\***Please number each of your critical reflection entries.**

**Prompts for Critical Reflection:**

\*Describe or summarize based on detailed observation of a several key passages/elements/moments/issues/themes that were important for you

\*Offer details of who, what, when, where, using specific names, references, and specific quotations when relevant.

\*Consider how theoretical questions relate to the creative texts and to life learning

\*Identify your reactions/questions/feeling responses.

\*Consider elements that are surprising or puzzling, as well as the unanswered questions and limits of your present knowledge.

\*Examine why certain examples, themes, questions were important for you and why you had the responses you did.

\*Consider what principles, assumptions, and ethical values are evident in the focus passages/examples and/or your responses.

\*Consider connections to new or prior learning.

\*Consider whether and how the cultural texts challenged any taken for granted or “common sense” personal or cultural assumptions and values.

\*Ask “why”? Ask “so what”? Ask “what now”?

**Grading:** Critical Reflection Journal marks will be based on assessment criteria collaboratively brainstormed with the class: 50% of your grade will be based on your self-assessment of your contribution and learning and 50% based on the Prof’s evaluation.

\*\*Adapted from Gillie Bolton. *Reflective Practice*. 4<sup>th</sup> ed. London: Sage Publications, 2014 and “Genres in Academic Writing: Reflective Writing”:

<http://www.uefap.com/writing/genre/reflect.htm>

\*Also see “Learning Journals I” from the Academic Success Writing Centre at the University of Regina: <http://www.uregina.ca/student/ssc/writing-support/writing-reflections/learning-journals1.html>

## Seminar Guidelines

- \***Introduce the artist** in terms of the First Nation, Territory or urban community he, she, or they identify with by consulting contextual materials such as interviews and biographies.
- \*Consider **relevant historical, social, or cultural contexts**, doing relevant research to support this.
- \*Identify, define, and explain the significance of **Indigenous words, concepts, knowledge, and cultural practices** in the texts under discussion.
- \*Consider matters of **form, genre, and aesthetic choices** where relevant.
- \*Demonstrate some understanding of the genre you are working with such as science fiction, fantasy, graphic novel, drama etc., using appropriate critical vocabulary.
- \*Make meaningful connections between the assigned **critical essay and the creative text**.
- \*Choose **three key focus passages** from the creative text that introduce one or more key questions, issues, or themes.
- \***Annotated passages:** All students are required to undertake detailed annotations of your focus passages and use these to generate your insights into the creative and/or critical texts. Please annotate in pencil only! Please submit photocopies of these annotations with your speaking notes. With respect to video, please choose three episode segments and write up notes on each key scene.
- \***Reading Aloud:** Invite seminar mates to take turns reading aloud from your selected focus passages.
- \***Handout:** Offer a handout (1-2 pages), which should include “Key Quotations” from the artist or critics and a point form preview of topics for discussion. Handouts should also include Focusing Questions and a Works Cited page.
- \***Focusing Questions:** Provoke insightful discussion about the poem through two thoughtful focusing questions. You may intersperse these throughout your seminar. Invite dialogue, discussion, and participation from your seminar-mates.
- \***Presentation Style:** I discourage simply reading a seminar paper, but I do require **well-developed seminar notes** that reflect that you have done thoughtful, detailed preparation work. I also discourage Power Point Presentations because they typically take away valuable time from reading and thinking and also render the classroom experience passive and screen-centric. You may use electronic media to show a video clip of the artist or other relevant material.
- \***Proper oral crediting of sources in seminars:** References to research in seminars should be indicated orally with such markers as “I Quote from critic x” to begin and “End Quote” to end or “these ideas are developed from critic x in his/her study titled x.”

## Final Research Project Options

- \*This project may be developed as a standard literature/cultural studies research and analysis essay (10 – 12 pages)
- \*It may be conceived as a collaboratively devised project with a classmate.
- \*It may be devised as a creative or educational project such as a website, video production, zine, graphic narrative on a topic/theme related to course material with a 1000 word explanatory introduction and Works Cited.
- \*The project should involve research in whatever way you want to creatively apply this category, i.e. more conventionally through library research or through alternative formats such as interviews (these may need research ethics clearance). I am happy to consult on alternative research pathways.

**\*If you do a collaborative project, you must submit a one-page self-evaluation of the division of labour and your contribution to the project.**

### **Final Research Project Proposal: Due: Nov. 1**

\*This proposal should include a working thesis or project preview and a plan of development that sets forth your argument and primary and secondary resources.

\*You should also include an **Annotated Works Cited** with at least 3 out of 5 sources annotated (Each annotation should provide a one paragraph summary of the main pts. and the usefulness to your working thesis).

\*Your works cited should include a diversity of kinds of sources such as one article, one book, one essay or interview on poetics where available. You are allowed only 1 allowed Internet source unless cleared with me; Sources from the electronic library-based databases are not considered Internet!)

### **Research Presentations/Preview: Due: Dec. 6**

\*Please write up your preliminary research findings and project developments (750 words) with an additional one page set of talking point notes.

\*These reflections should be developed beyond your proposals and give your seminar mates an idea of where your project is headed and what your preliminary research findings are. This is an opportunity for you to hear what each other's interests are and to give constructive feedback on the projects.

**Final Research Project Due Dec. 9 at midnight in English Dept. drop box (Contact Prof. to arrange for extensions as needed).**

## **COURSE POLICIES**

**Attendance and Participation:** Class works when you do. Active participation is essential. I define class participation as both physical and mental presence in class, evidenced by preparedness, engagement, and willingness to take risks. Students are required to **bring print versions of the readings to class** and come prepared to contribute to class discussion. **You may have two grace absences for sickness, emergencies or appointments.** Budget them well. Extend me the courtesy of letting me know when you will need to be absent. Life is unpredictable, so if you do have a difficulty of any kind this term, please keep me in the loop and let me know how I may be of help. Students sometimes make the mistake of not talking to Profs. when issues come up.

**Device Free Classroom: No laptops, Cell phones, Tablets, or e-readers:** In this class, we will give ourselves the gift of being distraction free so we can focus on the readings and discussion. I know this will be an adjustment for many of you, but the word on the street tells me that most of what goes on on screens in the classroom is not related to coursework (you all know what I'm talking about). This means that all devices will stay in your school bags and off your desktops.

**Exceptions:** The only students allowed to use laptops will be those with special permission from me for note-taking purposes.

**Late Assignment Policy:** In order to pass this course, you must complete ALL assignments and hand them in on time. Extensions must be arranged in person with me (for illness or other difficult circumstances only) in advance of the due date. Assignments handed in late without prior arrangement will be docked two points per day with a weekend counting as one day. Essays handed in more than one week late without prior notification may not be accepted.

**Plagiarism:** Academic honesty is considered the ground rule of any university level course. Plagiarism is defined in the “Academic Regulations of the University: Instructional Offences” section of the *Carleton Undergraduate Calendar* as “using and passing off as one’s own ideas the work of someone else without expressly giving credit to another.” If you find yourself tempted to use someone else’s work because of stress, illness, anxiety about your own ability, personal crisis, time crisis, or any other issues, I urge you to let me know about these circumstances, so that we can work together to create the space and means for you to do work of the highest integrity.

**Please ensure that all sources (including biographical and internet) used in reading responses, seminars, and final papers are properly credited.** If I suspect that any portion of your writing has been plagiarized, I am required to submit the writing to the Associate Dean of the Faculty. The penalties for plagiarism are very severe, ranging from failure in the course to expulsion from the university. See “How Not to Plagiarize: [www.utoronto.ca/writing/plagsep.html](http://www.utoronto.ca/writing/plagsep.html)

## ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION

**For Students with Disabilities:** Students with disabilities, including mental health disabilities, requiring academic accommodations in this course must contact a co-ordinator at the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities to complete the necessary *Letters of Accommodation*. After registering with the PMC, make an appointment to meet and discuss your needs with me in order to make the necessary arrangements as early in the term as possible.

**For Religious Observance:** Students requesting academic accommodation on the basis of religious observance should contact their instructors for alternate dates. Such requests should be made during the first two weeks of class, but no later than two weeks before the compulsory academic event. Instructors will make accommodations in a way that avoids academic disadvantage to the student.

**For Pregnancy:** Pregnant students requiring academic accommodations are encouraged to contact an Equity Advisor in Equity Services to complete a *letter of accommodation*. The student must then make an appointment to discuss her needs with the instructor at least two weeks prior to the first academic event in which it is anticipated the accommodation will be required.

## STUDENT SERVICES

**Writing Services:** If you know your writing needs improvement, do consider free tutoring with this service. <https://carleton.ca/csas/writingservices/>

**Carleton Health and Counselling Services** offers confidential consultations with medical doctors, lab testing, and emotional support for difficult times from Monday to Friday, 8:30-4:30. They are located in the Carleton Technology Building on the east side of campus. Check out their website at <http://carleton.ca/health/>

\*Also check out the Student Alliance for Mental Health: <http://www.samhcarleton.com/>