

**Carleton University
Winter 2023
Department of English**

ENGL 6004W: Approaches to the Production of Literature

Topic: The Production of Literary Criticism at the Present Time

Mondays 2:35pm-5:25pm

**Location: 1816 Dunton Tower
Format: In-person**

**Instructor: Prof. Julie Murray
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Office: 1803 Dunton Tower
Office Hours: by appointment**

Course Description:

This course focuses on the current state of literary criticism as a bellwether of the discipline of literary studies more broadly. We will explore critiques of the discipline from a range of perspectives, including but not limited to: defences of disciplinary specificity in the various returns to form, formalism, and form-as-politics versus the “salvaging” of the discipline seen in recent years in the surging popularity of creative writing programs and the digital humanities; the flight from criticism/critique on view in the form of Latourian “post-critique”; and the current work of “undisciplining” visible in many fields/periods/areas of literary studies in response to the ongoing reckoning with racism, anti-blackness, and the anti-black foundations of the profession as such.

Learning Outcomes:

To refine your ability to write and speak persuasively, to engage directly with different ideas, and to express yourself in clear, effective language.

To refine your ability to analyze literary, critical, and theoretical texts and make coherent and well-supported arguments.

To gain experience in giving oral presentations and to gain confidence in public speaking.

Note: We will devote a significant amount of the course to discussing the pleasures and pains of academic writing by reading recent work on the topic and taking time in class to discuss it (see weekly schedule for details).

Required Texts:

All course material is available on ARES. There are no course texts that you need to buy.

Course Requirements and Evaluation:

Participation and 6 Discussion Board Posts: (25%)

Seminar Presentation/Facilitation: (25%)

Research Essay Proposal and Bibliography (10%)

Research Essay: (40%)

Participation and SIX Discussion Board Posts: 25%

This is a very small seminar and its foundation is discussion. We will spend our time together each week discussing what we have read, discussing our posted responses to what we have read, and reflecting at length on both. It should go without saying that your presence and willingness to participate in this course will be essential to your success in this course. If you cannot make it to class due to illness or something very serious, please let me know in advance, if possible. I am not going to penalize anyone for missing class, but please know that your presence and participation is crucial, given our small group.

Discussion Board Posts: For your six discussion board posts, please post by **Sunday at 9pm** on Brightspace a 300-500 word response to the week's reading(s). Your post can take a number of forms: a reflection on an issue raised by the reading; a focus on a particular paragraph or small section of the reading – a “close reading”; a series of questions you have, whether ones you can answer or ones for us to wrestle with together. Your responses will provide the point of departure to our discussion in class each week.

Seminar Presentation and Facilitation: 25%

In the first class you will sign up for a week in which you will lead the class with a seminar presentation. Your presentation will involve discussing/explaining/analyzing one or more of the texts from the week's readings and should be roughly 20 minutes in length. You will also facilitate discussion for another 15 minutes. Your focus should be to help us to identify and understand the main ideas, argument, and issues of the assigned text. You're welcome to focus your presentation on any aspect of the text that interests you and engages with the main concerns of the course. Your objective is to help us all come to an understanding of some feature of the text: a key passage, a critical, theoretical, or political issue the text explores, or anything else you find worthy of note. Your analysis should not try to deal with the entire text; focus on a specific feature or issue and explain its significance. In order to promote new insight into the text, you will need to develop an analysis and make an argument – though it doesn't have to be stated in a formal thesis statement like in your research essay. The main thing is to persuade us of how and why the feature you've focused on is interesting and important and how it might change our understanding of the text in question.

You are free to read a scripted presentation, or, if you prefer, you can use talking points, or Power-Point, etc. Either way, you should submit on Brightspace an 8-10 page (double-spaced) write-up of your seminar presentation by **9pm on Sunday**, the day before class meets. Your write-up should follow MLA format, include a Works Cited, etc.

Research Essay Proposal and Bibliography (10%)

Due: March 20, 2023

You will write a 2-page (double-spaced) proposal for your research essay which establishes the topic of your paper, sketches out the argument or thesis you will pursue, and generally lays out the parameters of what you will cover. If you are planning to use the course readings to analyze a literary text, then please include a list of the readings you plan to consult. We will exchange and share proposals and workshop them together in the last class on April 8th. The essay is due one week later, on April 14th.

Research Essay (40%)

Due: April 17, 2023

Length: 15 pages (double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font, 1-inch margins)

You have two options for the essay. You can treat one or two of the major texts (ie, not the shorter pieces like reviews) on the course as *primary* texts and write an essay that develops an argument by situating your chosen texts in the midst of a current conversation in literary criticism and theory. We will generate possible topics each week as we work through the course. Or, you can choose a literary text of your own (maybe something from another course you are taking) and use one or two of our course readings as the theoretical context or frame for your argument. The first option is admittedly the more difficult because you probably have less experience treating theoretical and critical texts as “primary” sources. Whatever you choose to do, you will need to consult with me about your essay well before the proposal due date. The essay must conform to the conventions of academic writing and use MLA style and documentation, and use correct grammar, spelling, and be free of typos.

Essay format: Your essay should conform to the MLA style, as laid out in the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. The *MLA Handbook* (in various editions) is available in the reference section and in the stacks of the library. Or check out the website at www.mla.org.

Note: Remember to keep an electronic copy of your assignment when you submit any piece of work

PLAGIARISM

The University Academic Integrity Policy defines plagiarism as “presenting, whether intentionally or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one’s own.” This includes 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. Examples of sources from which the ideas, expressions of ideas or works of others may be drawn from include but are not limited to: books, articles, papers, literary compositions and phrases, performance compositions, chemical compounds, artworks, laboratory reports, research results, calculations and the results of calculations, diagrams, constructions, computer reports, computer code/software, material on the internet and/or conversations.

Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to:

- any submission prepared in whole or in part, by someone else;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, paraphrased material, algorithms, formulae, scientific or mathematical concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another's data or research findings without appropriate acknowledgement;
- submitting a computer program developed in whole or in part by someone else, with or without modifications, as one's own; and
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another's work and/or failing to use quotations marks.

Plagiarism is a serious offence that cannot be resolved directly by the course's instructor. The Associate Dean of the Faculty conducts 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.

Statement on Student Mental Health

As a University student you may experience a range of mental health challenges that significantly impact your academic success and overall well-being. If you need help, please speak to someone. There are numerous resources available both on- and off-campus to support you. Here is a list that may be helpful:

Emergency Resources (on and off campus): <https://carleton.ca/health/emergencies-and-crisis/emergency-numbers/>

Carleton Resources:

- Mental Health and Wellbeing: <https://carleton.ca/wellness/>
- Health & Counselling Services: <https://carleton.ca/health/>
- Paul Menton Centre: <https://carleton.ca/pmc/>
- Academic Advising Centre (AAC): <https://carleton.ca/academicadvising/>
- Centre for Student Academic Support (CSAS): <https://carleton.ca/csas/>
- Equity & Inclusivity Communities: <https://carleton.ca/equity/>

Off Campus Resources:

- Distress Centre of Ottawa and Region: (613) 238-3311 or TEXT: 343-306-5550, <https://www.dcottawa.on.ca/>
- Mental Health Crisis Service: (613) 722-6914, 1-866-996-0991, <http://www.crisisline.ca/>
- Empower Me: 1-844-741-6389, <https://students.carleton.ca/services/empower-me-counselling-services/>
- Good2Talk: 1-866-925-5454, <https://good2talk.ca/>
- The Walk-In Counselling Clinic: <https://walkincounselling.com>

Statement on Pandemic Measures

It is important to remember that COVID is still present in Ottawa. The situation can change at any time and the risks of new variants and outbreaks are very real. There are [a number of actions](#)

[you can take](#) to lower your risk and the risk you pose to those around you including being vaccinated, wearing a mask, staying home when you're sick, washing your hands and maintaining proper respiratory and cough etiquette.

Feeling sick? Remaining vigilant and not attending work or school when sick or with symptoms is critically important. If you feel ill or exhibit COVID-19 symptoms do not come to class or campus. If you feel ill or exhibit symptoms while on campus or in class, please leave campus immediately. In all situations, you should follow Carleton's [symptom reporting protocols](#).

Masks: Masks are no longer mandatory in university buildings and facilities. However, we continue to recommend masking when indoors, particularly if physical distancing cannot be maintained. We are aware that personal preferences regarding optional mask use will vary greatly, and we ask that we all show consideration and care for each other during this transition.

Vaccines: While proof of vaccination is no longer required to access campus or participate in in-person Carleton activities, it may become necessary for the University to bring back proof of vaccination requirements on short notice if the situation and public health advice changes. Students are strongly encouraged to get a full course of vaccination, including booster doses as soon as they are eligible and submit their booster dose information in [cuScreen](#) as soon as possible. Please note that Carleton cannot guarantee that it will be able to offer virtual or hybrid learning options for those who are unable to attend the campus.

All members of the Carleton community are required to follow requirements and guidelines regarding health and safety which may change from time to time. For the most recent information about Carleton's COVID-19 response and health and safety requirements please see the [University's COVID-19 website](#) and review the [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#). Should you have additional questions after reviewing, please contact covidinfo@carleton.ca.

Requests for Academic Accommodations

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: 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 accommodation regarding a formally scheduled final exam, you must complete the Pregnancy Accommodation Form ([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 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 will 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>