

Carleton University  
Fall/Winter 2020-2021  
Department of English

FYSM 1004A: Reading Literatures and Cultures

**A Seminar on Literature and “Inner Life”**

This seminar precludes additional credit for  
ENGL 1000, ENGL 1100, ENGL 1200, ENGL 1300, ENGL 1400, ENGL 1600  
scheduled block is Tues/Thurs 4:00-5:30 PM but this course meets **asynchronously**

Instructor: Professor Sarah Brouillette  
[sarah\\_brouillette@carleton.ca](mailto:sarah_brouillette@carleton.ca)

This online seminar will introduce students to the university study of literature, with an emphasis on reading and writing about the experience of selfhood or “inner life.” We will read notable texts that explore characters’ psyches in interesting ways, including work by James Joyce, Virginia Woolf, Kazuo Ishiguro, Sam Selvon, Philip Roth, Jamaica Kincaid, and Sally Rooney. We will also try to think historically about why these developments occurred. There will be brief audio and/or video lectures each week and a variety of activities to accompany the lecture, including an active, central online discussion forum. Any face-to-face conferencing will be optional and scheduled asynchronously. Assignments will be a mix of more traditional essay writing with more experimental forms such as creative first-person narrative and optional media production.

**Required Texts**

These are available at Haven Books, at 43 Seneca St. Haven delivers and has curbside pickup. However, because you may prefer to find books elsewhere, I will not be assigning readings using page number ranges, but will instead refer to key scenes, turning points, or use rough measures like “about a third.”

Fall term:

Virginia Woolf, *Mrs. Dalloway*  
Sam Selvon, *The Lonely Londoners*  
Philip Roth, *Goodbye, Columbus*

Winter term:

Kazuo Ishiguro, *The Remains of the Day*  
Carmen Maria Machado, *In the Dream House*  
Sally Rooney, *Normal People*

\*\*\* Additional texts not listed here are available as pdfs on cuLearn.\*\*\*

## Grading

Discussion forum	25%
Writing #1	10%
Writing #2	15%
Writing #3	20%
Final exam	30%

**Please see the guide to assessment (pp. 5-8, below) for detailed information and grading rubrics.**

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.

## Additional Notes

This is a writing-attentive course, which means you can expect to spend a significant amount of class time learning and improving university-level forms of thinking and writing, particularly essay-writing skills. We will concentrate on the following:

- establishment of university-level expectations for grammar and syntax
- establishment and refinement of literary-critical skills through close analysis of texts from a variety of genres
- generation and proof of an argumentative thesis across an essay
- establishment and refinement of sophisticated ideas and opinions using proper, correct and effective academic English style
- use and citation of primary literary texts in appropriate and convincing ways
- development of fluency in and facility with genre-specific literary terminology
- introduction to the fundamentals of secondary research (including critical evaluation, use, and citation of academic sources)

In writing attentive courses students complete a minimum of two graded writing assignments per term, in which they will be expected to demonstrate the above skills. They also write at least one formally scheduled examination.

## 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 serious offence that cannot be resolved directly by the 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.

The full policy can be found at: <https://carleton.ca/secretariat/wp-content/uploads/Academic-Integrity-Policy.pdf>

### **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**

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](mailto: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](https://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>

## SCHEDULE

### Fall term

Week 1 (Sept 7-13): Introductions

Week 2 (Sept 14-20): TS Eliot, "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock"

Week 3 (Sept 21-27): James Joyce, "A Painful Case"

Week 4 (Sept 28-Oct 4): James Joyce, "A Painful Case"

Week 5 (Oct 5-11): Starting Essay Writing

- draft of Writing #1 is due at the end of this week

Week 6 (Oct 12-18): Virginia Woolf, *Mrs. Dalloway*

- feedback on classmate's writing is due at the end of this week

Week 7 (Oct 19-25): Virginia Woolf, *Mrs. Dalloway*

Week 8 (Nov 2-8): Virginia Woolf, *Mrs. Dalloway*

- final draft of Writing #1 is due at the end of this week

Week 9 (Nov 9-15): Sam Selvon, *The Lonely Londoners*

Week 10 (Nov 16-22): Sam Selvon, *The Lonely Londoners*

Week 11 (Nov 23-29): Philip Roth, *Goodbye, Columbus*

Week 12 (Nov 30-Dec 6): Philip Roth, *Goodbye, Columbus*

Week 13 (Dec 6-12): Catching up and wrapping up

### Winter term

Week 1 (Jan 4-10): Library Research

Week 2 (Jan 11-17): Advanced Essay Writing

Week 3 (Jan 18-24): Kazuo Ishiguro, *The Remains of the Day*

Week 4 (Jan 25-31): Kazuo Ishiguro, *The Remains of the Day*

- draft of Writing #2 is due at the end of this week

Week 5 (Feb 1-7): Kazuo Ishiguro, *The Remains of the Day*

- feedback on classmate's writing is due at the end of this week

Week 6 (Feb 8-14): Tony Harrison, *V*

Week 7 (Feb 22-28): Tony Harrison, *V*

- Final draft of Writing #2 is due at the end of this week

Week 8 (Mar 1-7): Carmen Maria Machado, *In the Dream House*

Week 9 (Mar 8-14): Carmen Maria Machado, *In the Dream House*

Week 10 (Mar 15-21): Carmen Maria Machado, *In the Dream House*

Week 11 (Mar 22-8): Sally Rooney, *Normal People*

- writing #3 is due at the end of this week

Week 12 (Mar 29-Apr 4): Sally Rooney, *Normal People*

Week 13 (Apr 5-11): Wrapping Up / Exam Prep

## **Guide to Assessment**

This guide is a map. Ideally it will inform your work for this class, but I recognize that conditions are not ideal for learning for many of us right now. Please trust that if you stay engaged and do your best, you will do well in this course.

What makes up your grade?

Discussion forum	25%
Writing #1	10%
Writing #2	15%
Writing #3	20%
Final exam	30%

## **Detailed Explanation**

### **Discussion forum**

25% (about 1% per week)

Discussion will be the heart of this course. Most weeks, this will involve three tasks. First you will post a contribution to the discussion forum by no later than noon Wednesday. Please be respectful to your classmates and meet this deadline. The contribution will respond to questions and provocations that I will post on the discussion board page for that week. Second, you will share at least **one** response to a post by another member of your group by noon on Friday. That will give people time to respond to one another on the weekend if there is more you want to add. The best discussions happen when people post in a timely manner and read and respond to one another's posts. Try to do that. Lastly, read everyone's posts.

In creating your contributions think about these questions: Is this an important contribution to the discussion? How directly are you engaging with the assigned material? How engaged are you with the points of others? How much have you advanced the conversation and communicated deep thought on the subject? How relevant or helpful are your points?

### **Grading Rubric for Discussion Forum**

A Range:

Contributions are numerous, well-developed, and have advanced the discussion in important ways. Contributions directly refer to the discussion materials at hand, the larger rubric of the unit or course, and comments that other discussants have made. The student has obviously been engaged with both the material and comments from other discussants in the unit; they have made a substantial contribution to a useful discussion. Contributions posted on time.

B Range:

The student has not missed many posts and the posts are mainly on time. Their contributions reflect an engagement with the discussion material but not necessarily an engagement with other discussants in the

group. The contributions are solid enough, but a deeper level of understanding could have been shown with a more sustained or thorough engagement in the discussion.

**C Range:**

These contributions are substantial enough but do not directly engage with the assigned material or the comments of others. Contributions posted within 24 to 48 hours of when they were supposed to be posted.

**D Range:**

The student has made few contributions to the discussion, but these are late and/or too brief, generic, and/or have not made any difference to the discussion, and/or are unrelated to the topic at hand.

**F Range:**

No attempt has been made to contribute to small or large group discussion.

**Writing Assignments**

**Writing #1: Close Reading**

10%

Due 8 November by midnight

You will write a paper, 3 to 4 pages in length, providing a “close reading” of a short section from our readings.

A complete draft of your paper will be due by 11 October. You will be exchanging work with a classmate, for getting and giving feedback.

See the assignment sheet posted on cuLearn for more detailed instructions.

**Writing #2: Comparative Analysis**

15%

Due 23 February by midnight

You will write a paper, 4 to 5 pages in length, comparing two works we have studied. I will provide topic prompts to get you started.

A complete draft of your paper will be due by 31 January. You will be exchanging work with a classmate, for getting and giving feedback.

See the assignment sheet posted on cuLearn for more detailed instructions.

**Writing #3: You Teach**

20%

Due March 28 by midnight

You will have two options

1. Teach us something about one of the assigned readings. This could be a video, a slide presentation, an audio podcast, or basically any means you can imagine. You could teach us something about the historical context, the author's biography, or the reception of the work. Or you can focus on a portion of the text and reflect on its meaning. Be creative and have fun.
2. Create a tool to share with the group, in which you identify a literary \*or other cultural\* work (film, music, whatever) that we have not studied that you think has an innovative approach to exploring inner life. Teach this work to us in some form. This could be a video, a slide presentation, an audio podcast, or basically any means you can imagine.

See the assignment sheet posted on cuLearn for more detailed instructions.

### **Grading Rubric for Student Writing**

#### **A Range**

- The argument or point is clear throughout
- Independent thinking consistently developed
- Thoughtful, interpretive approach
- Sustained engagement with the assignment question
- The paper engages in the readings in a substantial and complex way
- Developed connections between the texts and the argument
- Writing, presentation, format is clear, fluid, logical with minimal or no errors
- Excellent balance of plot summary and analysis

#### **B Range**

- The argument is more complex than a "C-level" paper
- Use of texts is in the service of an argument
- The student comments on quotes, analyzes them adequately for the most part
- Sustained/meaningful structure; reasonable coherency
- Smoother transitions between argument and evidence
- Few errors, citations are well done; lack of proof-reading is not an overwhelming issue

#### **C Range**

- Argument is emerging but not fully developed; the argument is vague, general, or not clearly articulated from the outset
- Too much plot summary; not enough analysis
- The student uses quotes from the texts but does not comment on them
- Some coherent relationships between paragraphs
- sentence-level errors do not significantly impede meaning
- Some mechanical, citation, and/or formatting errors
- Failure to proofread for grammar, spelling, syntax etc.

#### **D-F Range**

- No argument discernible or argument too general/obvious to be meaningful
- No engagement with the assigned question
- A string of personal opinions
- Misunderstanding of the texts and overgeneralizations

- The paper lacks organizational structure
- Little coherence from paragraph to paragraph
- Long paragraphs or no use of paragraphs at all
- No use of topic sentences
- Sentence-level errors impede meaning; failure to proofread for grammar, spelling, syntax etc.
- Serious errors in citation conventions

### **Final Exam**

30%

The final exam for this course will be written at home during the exam period over a range of days. It will include three sections that will allow you to exhibit techniques learned throughout the course: (1) Close Reading (2) Short Answers to Specific Questions about Course Readings (comparative) and (3) A Reflective Essay.