

**Carleton University**  
**Early Summer 2025 Preliminary Course outline**  
**Department of English**

**ENGL 3605 A: Modern and Contemporary Literary Theory**  
**Topic: *Performances of Cultural Identity***

**Prerequisites:** third-year standing or permission of the department  
**Preclusions:** ENGL 3002 (no longer offered)

**Format:** Online (Combined Synchronous/Asynchronous)  
**Instructor:** John Coleman  
**Email:** [johncoleman3@cunet.carleton.ca](mailto:johncoleman3@cunet.carleton.ca)

**\*\*\* This is a preliminary syllabus only—texts and assignments are subject to change.**  
**A complete version will be available closer to the start of the term. \*\*\***

**Course description:** This course introduces students to contemporary literary theory with emphases on performances and constructions of identity in postcolonial and global literatures. We will study foundational theories of postcolonialism, cultural studies and literary production. These theories are influenced by structuralist, deconstructive, historicist and materialist approaches. Discussions will connect these theories to literary and cultural texts, the profession of authorship, and the marketing and promotion of contemporary literature.

We will have synchronous and asynchronous course components including lecture videos, readings, and weekly synchronous Zoom discussion meetings. The course's weekly modules include readings and lecture videos made available throughout the term. Assignments and discussion topics will correspond with readings and videos.

**Learning Outcomes:** The purpose of this course is for students to:

- Be introduced to critical approaches to identity and cultural production in contemporary literary theory
- Be introduced to recent critical debates about being a writer or cultural producer in multicultural society
- Learn approaches for applying theory to readings of literary and cultural texts
- Practice and develop academic research, communication and writing skills

**Texts:**

All required texts will be available on Ares or Brightspace.

**Evaluation:**

General criteria that influence grading: All work completed for this course will receive a numerical grade that corresponds to the guidelines set out by the Faculty of Arts:  
90-100 – A+; 85-89 – A; 80-84 – A-; 77-79 – B+; 73-76 – B; 70-72 – B-; 67-69 – C+; 63-66 – C; 60-62 – C-; 57-59 – D+; 53-56 – D; 50-52 – D-; Below 50 – F

All term work will be subject to the following general evaluation criteria:

Each student is encouraged to genuinely engage with course material by expressing clear ideas about assigned readings, lecture material and class discussions. Furthermore, it is paramount for students to display a genuine attempt at:

- (a) developing writing and comprehension skills
- (b) genuine, critical engagement with course material

All written assignments designated under “Term Work” will be subject to the following evaluative criteria in addition to any particular criteria stated in each assignment’s outline:

- 1) Written assignments are to be presented in MLA citation style and format. All references must be cited parenthetically in your prose. Written assignments should be formatted following MLA style (typed, double-spaced, 12 point Times New Roman Font, numbered pages, identification info at top left-hand corner of page one). Students are encouraged to consult the MLA Handbook.
- 2) Where applicable, significant consideration will be paid to:
  - (a) accuracy in identifying texts, authors and context
  - (b) effective expression and communication of ideas through proper grammar, spelling, punctuation and sentence and paragraph structure

### **Term Work:**

- **Prompt Journal, 20% of the final grade (pass/fail grading):**

- First submission: (5%)
- Second submission: (15%)

Students will be given prompts to complete designed to get students thinking about our texts, topics, and assignments. Written feedback will be provided on the first submission only.

To receive a passing grade, responses must be adequately completed. Otherwise, the journal will receive a lower and possibly a failing grade.

- **Reading Response, 15% of final grade:**

Students will write a reading response based on a text and topic assigned by the instructor. The assignment instructions will be provided in advance of the due date.

- **Discussion Meeting Participation, 25% of the final grade:**

Throughout the course, we will have Zoom discussion meetings, during which students will discuss questions and/or complete writing prompts.

- **Quiz, 10% of the final grade**

- **Research Essay, 30% of the final grade**