

Carleton University  
**Fall 2025/Winter 2026 Preliminary Course Outline**  
Department of English

**ENGL 3106A: Theories and Critical Practices**

**Prerequisites:** third year standing or permission of the department

**Instructor:** Professor B. Johnson  
**Email:** [Brian.Johnson@carleton.ca](mailto:Brian.Johnson@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 foundational theories and methods for doing literary and cultural studies, with the additional aim of helping students hone their skills of research, writing, and independent critical thinking. Throughout the year, we will explore a wide variety of theory and criticism alongside poetry, fiction, film, comics, and cultural ephemera that will provide focal points for putting these critical approaches into play and sharpening every student's analytical range and skillset.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Students will develop skills in the following areas: the advanced analysis of literary and cultural texts; reading and understanding literary theory; employing critical vocabularies and methodologies to inform such analyses; reading and making use of secondary sources.

**TEXTS**

Peter Barry, *Beginning Theory*  
Nick Couldry, *Inside Culture*  
Lord Dunsany, *The King of Elfland's Daughter*  
Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein*, 1818 Edition  
William Gibson, *Neuromancer*  
Octavia Butler, *Parable of the Sower*  
Ridley Scott, *Alien*  
Wendy Pini and Richard Pini, *ElfQuest: The Original Quest* (#1-20) ([elfquest.com](http://elfquest.com))

**EVALUATION**

10% Attendance  
20% Reading Journal  
10% Fall Mid-Term Test  
25% December Exam  
10% Project Proposal Presentations  
25% April Exam