

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

**ENGL 2005: *Theory and Criticism***

**Prerequisites:** second-year standing or permission of the department.

**Instructor: John Coleman, PhD**  
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**\*\*\* *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 a variety of approaches in literary and cultural theory, with emphasis on how intersections of race, class, gender, and ability are represented in contemporary literature. Foundational perspectives in materialist, feminist and postcolonial theory will inform our discussions of literary analysis. Short stories and poems will accompany theoretical readings. Assignments and activities will develop skills in critical engagement, literary analysis and academic writing.

**Learning Outcomes:**

The purpose of this course is for students to:

- Be introduced to a variety of approaches in literary and cultural theory
- Gain familiarity with and explore individual theoretical approaches
- Compare, and contrast different theoretical approaches
- Learn to produce critically engaged, theoretically guided interpretations of literary texts
- Practice and develop academic research, writing and communication skills

**Texts:** All required readings will be available to download on Ares and to access on Brightspace.

**Evaluation:**

**Term work and Exams:**

- **Prompt Journal, 20% of final grade:**
  - First submission: (5%)
  - Second submission: (15%, pass/fail grading)

Students will be given prompts to get thinking about our texts and topics. Attendance at a class when a prompt is given is required to submit that prompt. Written feedback will be provided on only the first submission of the prompt journal.

- **Reading Response, 10% of final grade:**

Students will write a reading response based on a topic assigned by the instructor.

- **Discussion Posts, 10% of final grade:**

Students will post on a discussion forum on Brightspace based on assigned topics and questions.

- **Class Attendance and Participation, 20% of final grade**

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

- **Final Exam, 30% of final grade**