Carleton University
Fall 2025 Preliminary Course Outline
Department of English

ENGL 3501A: Literatures and Cultures 1900-Now

Precludes additional credit for ENGL 3502 (no longer offered).
Prerequisite(s): third-year standing or permission of the department.

Instructor: Professor D. Dragunoiu
Email: dana.dragunoiu@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. ******

In this survey of twentieth-century literature, we will study the central preoccupations of its writers through the motif of the journey. As a metaphor for life and discovery, the journey holds a hallowed place in our literary history and is revived in its epic form in defining works of Modernism, such as Marcel Proust's *In Search of Lost Time* and James Joyce's *Ulysses.* But it also figures in shorter works—such as Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse*, Samuel Beckett's *Molloy,* Jean Rhys's *Voyage in the Dark*, Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*, and Tomson Highway's *Kiss of the Fur Queen*—in which journeys are belatedly fulfilled, mercilessly delayed, or found to lead back to their place of origin. Our readings will crisscross the vast expanse of twentieth-century literature and culture: from the banks of the Vivonne in the French countryside walked by Proust's Marcel to the wanderings of Stephen Dedalus and Leopold Bloom along the river Liffey in Dublin, from the Ramsays' arrival at the lighthouse on an island in the Hebrides to Molloy's labored wanderings through unrecognizable landscapes, from Pecola Breedlove's blighted childhood in Ohio and Anna Morgan's blighted life in England to Champion and Ooneemeetoo Okimasis's enforced exile from their childhood home in northern Manitoba. We will be guided by the questions that bedevil those who embark upon these journeys: What is personal identity? Should the self be loyal to itself, to the community to which it belongs, or to a community universally conceived? What does it mean to arrive at a destination? What is our relationship to the past and what does it mean to hold something or someone in memory? Are we free or determined?

REQUIRED READING

Marcel Proust, *Swann's Way* (1913) and selections from *Time Regained* (1927)
Virginia Woolf, *To the Lighthouse* (1927)
James Joyce, selections from *Ulysses* (1922)
Samuel Beckett, *Molloy* (1951)
Jean Rhys, *Voyage in the Dark* (1934)
Toni Morrison, *The Bluest Eye* (1970)
Tomson Highway, *Kiss of the Fur Queen* (1998)