

Carleton University  
**Summer 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 online 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 theories 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. Students will attend Zoom class meetings.

**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.

- Students are not required to purchase textbooks or other learning materials for this course.

**Evaluation:**

Term work:

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

- Students will be given prompts to get thinking about our texts and topics. Attendance during a class when a prompt is given is required to be able to submit that prompt in one of the prompt journal submissions. Written drafts will be uploaded during class time.
  - Written feedback will be provided on only the first submission.
  - Throughout the term, six prompts will be given, from which students will select for their prompt journal submissions.
- **Reading Response, 20% of final grade**  
Students will write a reading response based on a topic assigned by the instructor.
  - **Zoom Class Attendance and Participation, 20% of final grade**  
Attendance will be taken at each class. Participation will be evaluated through discussion and writing activities students do in class.  
The **Discussion Forum** on Brightspace will also be assigned for activities for participation marks.  
Written feedback on participation activities will not be returned.
  - **Research Essay, 30% of final grade**

Quiz:

- **Quiz, written during term, 10% of final grade**