

Carleton University
Fall-Winter 2026-27
Department of English Language and Literature

ENGL 2802A
Indigenous and Canadian Literatures

***** 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. *****

I Course Description: English 2802A introduces students to a variety of texts—traditional stories, exploration narratives, life writing, poetry, songs, short stories, critical essays, plays, policy documents, novels (including a graphic novel), and visual art—produced in and/or about the part of Turtle Island also known as Canada. Putting contemporary works into conversation with writing from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the course invites students to recognize and interpret the ways in which generations of authors and artists from Indigenous and Settler cultures have used stories and language to imagine and re-imagine this place and its peoples in radically different but sometimes overlapping ways. Classes will consist of lectures, discussion, and in-class writing activities.

II Learning Outcomes: Students in this class will learn to analyze and interpret the ways in which texts by Indigenous and Settler authors articulate divergent relationships to land, place, and history. They will also develop their skills in close reading, secondary research, critical thinking, and persuasive argumentation.

III ENGL 2802 is a “writing attentive” course, which means that:

- Students will write at least one examination or culminating reflective assignment
- Students will complete a number of writing assignments (including at least one formal essay) in which they are expected to do the following:
 - i. develop an argument across each piece of writing
 - ii. develop complex and persuasive arguments using persuasive, clear and grammatically correct English
 - iii. develop literary reading skills through close analysis of poetry and/or prose passages
 - iv. use and cite evidence from primary texts appropriately, using the MLA documentation style
 - v. develop secondary research and citation skills

A portion of class time will be devoted to developing and improving research and writing skills, including essay-writing skills.

IV Required Texts: (available at The Campus Store, Carleton University)

Fall Term

Richard Wagamese, *Indian Horse* (price TBA)
Sheila Watson, *The Double Hook*, (price TBA)

Winter Term

David Chariandy, *Soucouyant*, price TBA
Drew Hayden Taylor, *Cottagers and Indians* price TBA
Tomson Highway, *The Rez Sisters* price TBA
Jillian Tamaki and Mariko Tamaki, *This One Summer*

The prices above are for new, paperback editions. Students are permitted to use e-book or used editions.

Additional readings will be available through ARES, the course reserve system. To access ARES readings, go to the ENGL 2802A Brightspace course and select “ARES Reserves” from the drop-down menu under “Tools.”

*Important note: Some of these readings deal with subject matter that some readers may find distressing (i.e. domestic violence, child sexual abuse, suicide). If this is of concern to you, please do not hesitate to let me know.

V Evaluation:

Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by the instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.

In-class Reading Responses: 20% (4 per term x 2.5 marks each; consult course schedule for dates)

In-class Writing Activities/Workshops: 10% (scheduled throughout the year; consult course schedule for dates)

Close Reading Assignment: 15% (due on Brightspace at 11:59pm Friday, November 28)

December Exam: 15% (scheduled exam period)

Research Essay: 20% (due on Brightspace at 11:59pm Friday, March 20)

April Exam: 20% (scheduled exam period)

VI Assignment Guidelines: Fall Term

Reading Responses (4 per semester x 2.5 marks each = 20%): This is an in-class activity that will take place four times per term. On the dates indicated on the Reading Schedule, I will provide a writing prompt based on the reading for that day. **To answer the prompt, you must have read the text before coming to class.** You will have 20 minutes to write a paragraph (4-6 sentences) that responds to the prompt as persuasively and insightfully as possible in the time that you have. You are invited to share your responses in the class discussion that follows, but this will not be part of the grading rubric (consult Reading Responses document in the Assignments module on Brightspace for rubric). Responses are due at the end of class and are

handwritten. Notebooks will be provided, so make sure to pay attention to the Reading Schedule and bring your notebook and a pen/pencil on appropriate days. Prompts will be projected on the screen in class; all readings and electronic devices must be stowed during the activity.

There will be one make-up session per semester for responses that are missed due to illness, religious observation, or other valid reasons. Students may make up a maximum of two missed responses. You may not write make-up responses simply to obtain a better mark on a response you have already written.

In-class Writing Activities/Workshops (5% per term x 2 = 10%): These will include activities like brainstorming sessions, small group discussions, and close reading and writing workshops. The dates for these activities are indicated in the Reading Schedule. Evaluation will be based on attendance and participation in workshop activities (you may have to submit in-class writing activities by uploading them to Brightspace or by handwriting them in your Reading Response notebook).

Close Reading Assignment, 15%, 1000-1200 words (roughly 4 pages), 12 pt. font, double spaced): This will be an analysis of an excerpt from one of the prose texts we have studied in the fall term. Whichever excerpt you choose to analyze, you will be required to type it out and then annotate it by hand (we will be practicing how to annotate in writing activities throughout the term). You are also required to produce a 1000-1200-word written analysis based on your annotation. You must submit your annotation to Brightspace along with your written analysis. Evaluation will be based on your ability to engage with the details of a piece of writing and on your ability to draw persuasive conclusions about how these details contribute to the larger meaning of the text. Your analysis **must** include properly cited, accurate quotations from the passage you are writing about and a list of works cited. Correct punctuation, grammar, and MLA format must be used. Consult the Close Reading Assignment document in the Assignments module on Brightspace for more details.

December Exam (15%, Scheduled Exam Period): This two-hour in-person exam will test the close-reading skills (poetry) you will be practicing this term. It will take the form of a “sight passage”: you will be given a selection of poems by poets we have studied in the fall term (these will be poems you have not seen before, but the poets’ names will be given to you in advance to help you prepare). Choose ONE of these poems and do a close analysis of it as you will have been taught to do in class. This will involve annotating the poem on the exam paper and then collecting your observations and questions about the poem into a written analysis that advances an argument as to what you think the poem is about and how it achieves its effects. Evaluation will be based on how well you engage with the details of the poem and incorporate these into a written analysis in the time that you have. **It is your responsibility to consult the exam schedule and ensure that you will be in town for the exam.**

VII Assignment Guidelines: Winter Term

Research Essay, 20%: Topics will be posted in the Assignments module in Brightspace **before the end of the fall term.** The topics will cover texts from the fall term and the first half of the

winter term. **You will be required to choose a topic by the time classes resume after the winter break in February.** This is because there will be in-class writing activities in the second half of the winter term that are designed to help stimulate your thinking about how you will write an essay on that topic.

The essay must be roughly 6 pages long (roughly 1800 words). It must reference at least two secondary sources about the literary text you are writing on. It **must** include accurate, properly cited quotations from the literary text and the secondary sources and include a list of works cited. MLA format must be correctly used. For a fuller description, consult the Research Essay document in the Assignments module on Brightspace.

April Exam (20%, scheduled exam period): This three-hour, in-person exam will cover material from the winter term only. It will consist of definitions of terms, passage analysis, and short-answer questions. Regular attendance and careful notetaking will increase your chances of writing a high-quality exam. **It is your responsibility to consult the exam schedule and make sure you are in town for the exam.**

VIII Expectations and Class Rules:

Attendance: I will be taking attendance regularly, especially in the fall term, as it helps me to learn everyone's names. Attendance on days when writing activities/workshops are scheduled is part of the 10% grade you receive for participating in those activities. **Regular** attendance is crucial to student success in an English class like this one, since the classroom is where we share information and develop reading and writing skills (unlike in some other disciplines, English instructors generally do not post their lecture notes on Brightspace). I post PowerPoint slides for almost every class, but these are supplemental to the lectures/discussions, **not** a substitute for them.

Students who attend classes regularly and take careful notes stand a far better chance of doing well in the course than those who do not. This is in part because the exams will test you on information/skills that you have learned in class.

For every class, you are expected to arrive having read the assigned readings (including novels), and to bring them with you. As you read, note the elements you find interesting. Think about connections to other texts or to issues we have been discussing in class. Bring questions. Slow and attentive reading will improve your ability to participate in class and your ability to retain information when it comes to the exams.

Classroom courtesy: The classroom should be a safe and respectful environment for all of us. Phones and laptops are to be used for reading course materials and/or note-taking only. Please refrain from checking social media or randomly surfing the web during class. This is discourteous to the instructor and distracting for your fellow students. Please stay for the duration of the class; if you must leave early, I would appreciate it if you would let me know beforehand.

Submission of Assignments: Notebooks for in-class reading responses must be submitted at the end of class. The Close Reading Assignment and the Research Essay must be uploaded to Brightspace.

Late Penalty: The late penalty is 2% per day late, including weekends. If you cannot complete an assignment on time because you are ill, in place of a doctor's note, you may complete the self-declaration form on the Registrar's Office website to request accommodation for missed deadlines (<https://carleton.ca/registrar/wp-content/uploads/self-declaration.pdf>). Late assignments may be returned to you without comments/feedback. **If you are struggling to complete an assignment on time, please do not hesitate to speak to me about it and we can discuss arranging an extension.**

Bonus Marks: During the year, you will have the opportunity to earn bonus marks for attending literary events outside class time. Please provide proof of attendance (a selfie, a screenshot, a ticket stub etc.) and one mark will be added to your final grade for the course.

IX PLAGIARISM: The University Academic Integrity Policy defines plagiarism as “presenting, whether intentionally or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one's own.” This includes reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else's published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one's own without proper citation or reference to the original source. Examples of sources from which the ideas, expressions of ideas or works of others may be drawn from include but are not limited to books, articles, papers, literary compositions and phrases, performance compositions, chemical compounds, artworks, laboratory reports, research results, calculations and the results of calculations, diagrams, constructions, computer reports, computer code/software, material on the internet and/or conversations.

Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to:

- any submission prepared in whole or in part, by someone else, including the unauthorized use of generative AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT).*
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, paraphrased material, algorithms, formulae, scientific or mathematical concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment.
- using another's data or research findings without appropriate acknowledgement.
- submitting a computer program developed in whole or in part by someone else, with or without modifications, as one's own; and
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another's work and/or failing to use quotations marks.

Plagiarism is a serious offence that cannot be resolved directly by the course's instructor. The Associate Dean of the Faculty conducts a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They can include a final grade of “F” for the course.

***Note on AI use:** AI use is prohibited for any aspect of work submitted for evaluation in this class. Using an AI chatbot to brainstorm ideas, or to generate ideas or essay outlines, or any aspect of text that you submit under your own name is cheating and this should go without saying.