

COURSE: Selected Topics in Migration and Diaspora Studies
African and Black Diaspora Studies
MGDS5002A/AFRI5700A

TERM: Fall 2020

CLASS: **Day & Time:** Mondays, 11:30-2:30
Website: CuLearn

INSTRUCTOR: Daniel McNeil

CONTACT: **Office** By appointment
Email daniel.mcneil@carleton.ca

Due to the ongoing COVID crisis, all seminars will be conducted via videoconferencing. Please use the CuLearn course website to access seminars and group activities.

I. Course Description

This seminar on the social, cultural, economic and political implications of the movement and transnational settlement of people takes a multidisciplinary and multiscalar approach to African and Black Diaspora Studies.

II. Learning Outcomes:

Identify critical debates and issues in the field of African and Black Diaspora Studies

Identify and apply disciplinary and interdisciplinary theories, concepts, and methods in the field of African and Black Diaspora Studies.

Deepen and extend knowledge of particular debates and issues in the field of African and Black Diaspora Studies.

Communicate effectively in oral and written form for academic and professional audiences, with an ability to synthesize and critically evaluate material as well as advance original arguments.

III. Texts:

The course consists of various academic texts and several popular texts in multiple formats. Academic articles will be available on the culearn website and Ares.

IV. Course Calendar:

September 14

Introduction to the course

September 21

What is this 'African' in 'African and Black Diaspora Studies'?

- Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*
Chapter 6, "The Black Man and Psychopathology"
- Paul Tiyambe Zeleza, "The inventions of African identities and languages: The discursive and developmental implications." Selected proceedings of the 36th conference on African linguistics. Somerville, MA: Cascadilla Proceedings Project, 2006.
- TEDTalks Chimamanda Adichie - The Danger of a Single Story (2012)
- Caryl Phillips, What is Africa to Me Now? Research in African Literatures 46.4 (2015)

September 28

What is this 'Black' in 'African and Black Diaspora Studies'?

- Lewis Gordon, "Black Intellectual Tradition," *The Encyclopedia of American Studies* (2009).
- Steve Biko, [*I Write What I Like*](#) (London: Heinemann, 1978).
 - Chapter 9, 'The Definition of Black Consciousness' and chapter 11, 'White Racism and Black Consciousness'.
- Saatchi & Saatchi Political Advertising Campaign, "Labour says he's Black, Tories Say he's British" (1983).

- Stuart Hall, "What Is This 'Black' in Black Popular Culture?," *Social Justice* 20.1/2 (1993), 104–114.
- Mae Henderson, *Speaking in Tongues and Dancing Diaspora: Black Women Writing and Performing*
Chapter 14, "About Face: Or what is this Back in B(l)ack Popular Culture?"
- Michelle Stephens, "What Is This *Black* in Black Diaspora?" *Small Axe* 13. 2 (2009): 26-3.

October 5

What is this 'Diaspora' in 'African and Black Diaspora Studies'?

- Ralph Ellison, "Some questions and some answers" in Ralph Ellison, *Shadow and Act*
- Paul Gilroy, "Living Memory: Toni Morrison Talks to Paul Gilroy," *City Limits*, 31 March-7 April 1988 (republished in Paul Gilroy, *Small Acts* (London: Serpent's Tail, 1993), pp. 175-182).
- Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic*
Chapter 6, "Not a story to pass on"
- Paul Gilroy, "Diaspora," *Paragraph* 17.3, November 1994, pp. 207-212.
- Brent Hayes Edwards, "The Uses of Diaspora," *Social Text*, no. 66 (2001).

October 12: Public Holiday. No class

October 19

Black Study

- Stefano Harney and Fred Moten, *The Undercommons: Fugitive Planning and Black Study*

October 26-30: Fall Break – no classes

November 2

Black Art

- The Other Story: Afro-Asian Artists in Post-War Britain
Hayward Gallery, London, 1989–90
<https://www.afterall.org/exhibition-histories/the-other-story/hayward-gallery-1989#view-12661>
- Lucy Steeds, ‘Retelling “The Other Story” – or What Now?’, in *Afterall: Exhibition Histories*, 30 September 2018, <https://www.afterall.org/exhibition-histories/the-other-story/retelling-the-other-story-or-what-now>
- Elizabeth Alexander, “Can you be BLACK and Look at this? Reading the Rodney King Video(s),” in *The Black Public Sphere* (University of Chicago Press, 1995).
- bell hooks, “Feminism as a persistent critique of history: What's love got to do with it?” in *The fact of blackness : Frantz Fanon and visual representation* ed. Alan Read (London : Institute of Contemporary Arts, 1996)
- Without Sanctuary: Photographs and Postcards of Lynching: <https://withoutsanctuary.org/>
- Eric Lott, “A Strange and Bitter Spectacle,” *First of the Month*, June 1, 2002.

November 9

Visit to the Carleton University Art Gallery



Virtual Visit to [They Forgot That We Were Seeds](#)

- *Exhibition summary:* This exhibition brings together Black and Indigenous women artists around the subject of food. Their compelling works about the production, trade and consumption of such goods as cod and sugar firmly embed Canada in the global history of colonialism.
- Robin Wall Kimmerer, “Council of Pecans,” *Braiding Sweetgrass* (Milkweed Editions: 2015), p. 10 - 21.

- The Curious Case of the Proliferating Pepperpot, British Food in America.
- Corey Mintz, The History of Food in Canada Is the History of Colonialism, *The Walrus*.
- Chantal Martineau, The Underexplored Roots of Black Cooking in Nova Scotia, *Saveur*.

November 16

African and Black Diaspora Studies on the stage

Guest Lecturer: Diane Roberts, Director, Dramaturg, Cultural Animator

Readings tbc

November 23

The Cinema of the African and Black Diaspora I

Guest Lecturer: Professor Aboubakar Sanogo

Readings tbc

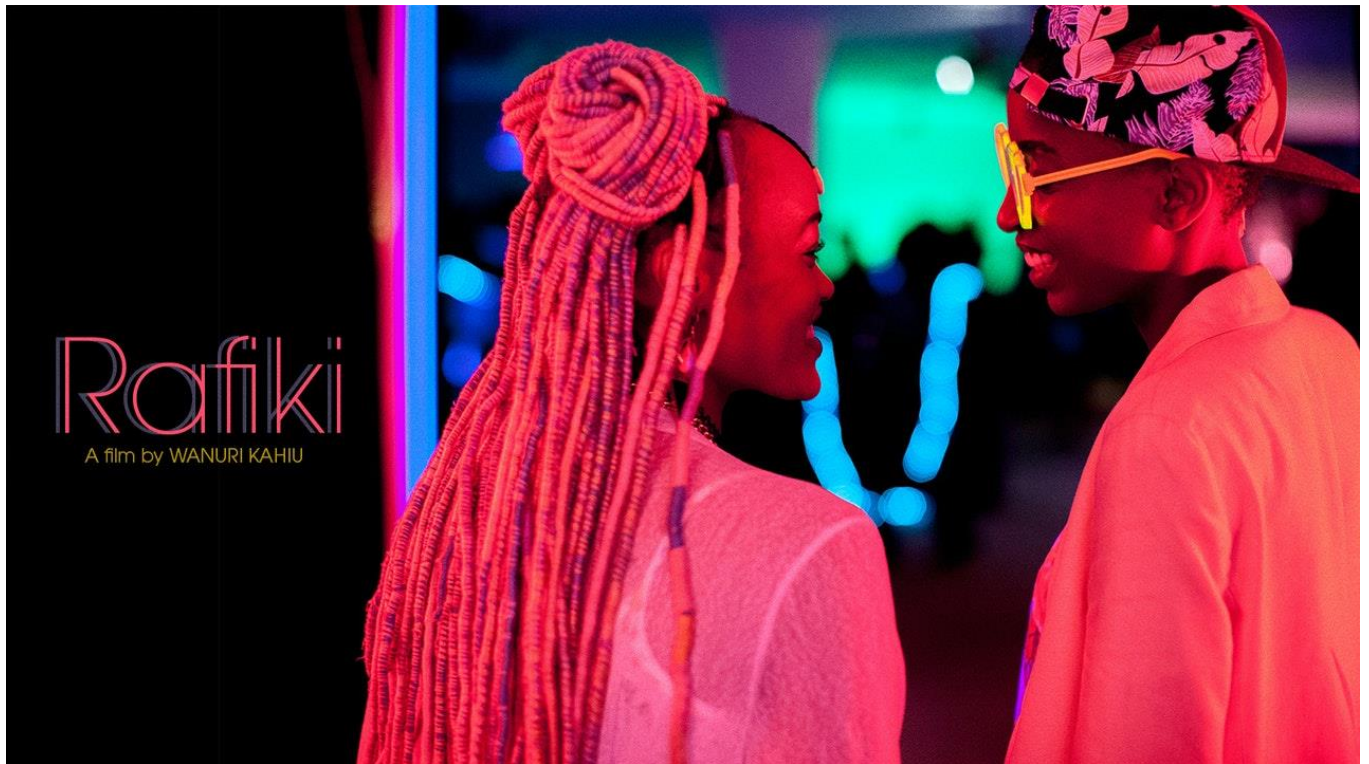
November 30

The Cinema of the African and Black Diaspora II

Guest Lecturer: Professor Malini Guha

Readings tbc

In advance of the class, please watch *Rafiki* (available to screen on [Kanopy](#) and the [Criterion channel](#))



Rafiki

Directed by Wanuri Kahiu • 2018 • Kenya

Starring Samantha Mugatsia, Sheila Muniya

Bursting with the colorful street style and music of Nairobi's vibrant youth culture, RAFIKI is a tender love story between two young women in a country that still criminalizes homosexuality. Kena and Ziki have long been told that "good Kenyan girls become good Kenyan wives," but they yearn for something more. Despite the political rivalry between their families, the girls encourage each other to pursue their dreams in a conservative society. When love blossoms between them, Kena and Ziki must choose between happiness and safety. Initially banned in Kenya for its positive portrayal of queer romance, RAFIKI made history by winning a landmark supreme court case chipping away at Kenyan anti-LGBT legislation.

December 7

Rethinking Liberation: African Independence and the Making of the Twentieth Century

Guest Lecturer: Candace Sobers

Readings tbc

December 11

Capstone Presentations

V. Evaluation:

Your final grade will be based on:
Keyword assignment (15%). **Due October 13**
Cultural Criticism (25%) **Due November 16**
Capstone presentation (10%): **Due December 11**
Final assignment (40%) **Due December 18**
Class participation (10%)

Keyword assignment

Choose one of the following keywords:

Africa
African
Black
Diaspora
Diasporic

- i. Critically evaluate how the concepts have been defined in society – in its informal and extra-institutional spaces as well as in its institutional ones.
- ii. Develop a multilayered explanation and interpretation for each entry. (NB: In your critical explanation and interpretation, you are encouraged to examine how each term or phrase has acquired quite discrepant and even contrary meanings over time and across space. In other words, you are being asked to address the existence of a different formation and distribution of energy and interest around key terms or phrases, and consider how these terms or phrases are distinguished by different immediate values and distinct kinds of valuation.)

The keyword assignment should be approximately 6 double spaced pages (using 12 point size, Times New Roman font). It should not exceed 8 pages. Chicago reference style is preferred.

Examples of keyword assignments are posted on the culearn course site.

Cultural Criticism

In our classes on October 19 and November 2, we will explore a variety of ways in which Black intellectuals have responded to art, culture and study. Some have developed co-authored texts that are inspired by Black music. Others have pursued reconstructive acts of labour by revisiting controversial art exhibits. For this assignment you are expected to:

- 1) Plan and stage a conversation about African and Black Diasporic art, culture or study (this may be written down and/or recorded with audio or video).

Or

- 2) Review a piece of African and Black Diasporic art (this could be something in a gallery, a film, an advertisement, etc.). In this review you should entice an indifferent or hostile reader into the themes and issues under review (i.e. explain why the topics covered by the work of art is important to people who do not specialize in African and Black Diaspora Studies) and/or advance critical inquiry by encouraging, provoking or vexing the reader interested in African and Black Diaspora Studies into some fresh thinking

Individual or group submissions are accepted. For example, you may write the conversation or review in your own voice. You may also experiment with modelling the review in the style of one of the cultural critics covered in the course, or stage a conversation between yourself and another member of the class or a cultural critic.

Capstone Presentation

This presentation should briefly (in 10 minutes or less) introduce the shape and contours of your final assignment. It should convey why you chose the topic and why the topic matters.

Final Assignment

This assignment will allow you to pursue your own interest in African and Black Diaspora Studies by bringing relevant texts from outside our course to bear on our work together this term. It is an open and expansive assignment that is an opportunity to address African and Black Diaspora Studies in an imaginative and creative manner. You may work individually or in groups.

Examples are listed below and on the culearn site

1) A critical reflection on the politics and poetics of African and Black Diasporic Culture.

E.g. Critically describe a piece of African and Black Diasporic Culture has changed your life, sparked your imagination, made you think and feel more deeply.

Or

Critically describe a book or intellectual that has influenced your thinking about issues relating to African and Black Diaspora Studies.

These critical reflections should engage with content you have digested and theories you have read in this course relating to the African and Black Diaspora Studies.

2) A podcast modelled on one of the following:

i) [Desert Island Discs](#)

On this long-running show, guests are invited to pick eight tracks, a book and a luxury that they would take to a desert island as the soundtrack of their lives.

If you choose this approach, you might want start by listening to 5-10 episodes of the show to get a feel for its scope and format (e.g. [75 Years of Desert Island Discs](#) and [Steve McQueen's Desert Island Discs](#))

Your final submission might:

- a) Focus on what you would choose and say to the interviewer if you were asked to pick eight tracks, a book and a luxury that speak to the goals and themes of the course.
- b) Use the exercise as one of historical imagination, and investigate further the biographies of your chosen 'castaway' to identify the music that inspired them and speaks to their life and work.
- c) Work in pairs so that there is an interviewer and a 'castaway'.

You are also welcome to draw on other type of podcasts that invite dialogue and reflection about African and Black Diaspora Studies as a model for your assignment.

Some examples include:

ii) [Denzel Washington is the Greatest Actor of All Time. Period.](#)

Comedians W. Kamau Bell & Kevin Avery are absolutely certain of one thing: Denzel Washington is the greatest actor of all time. And every week they will prove it as they talk Denzel with guests, share the latest "Denzel News" and review every Denzel movie in alphabetical order (mostly)

iii) [The Champs](#)

"If someone had told you 10 years ago that the brightest and funniest minds of our generation soon would be offering up free radio shows every week — which you could hear on your phone whenever you wanted — would you have believed him? In our opinion, the best podcast going is *The Champs*, hosted by *Chappelle's Show* co-creator Neal Brennan and comedian Moshe Kasher. The premise is a bit un-PC: The pair, who are white, interview almost exclusively black guests, drawn largely from the realms of television, movies, music and sports. But what could be an hour of face-palms almost always turns into something poignant, revealing and downright inspirational. The guests are often famous (Chris Rock, Blake Griffin, Questlove), but Brennan and Kasher frequently steal the show with their personal insights. Before your ears, Brennan comes to terms with the fact that he's an asshole, and Kasher realizes that his insane childhood has probably scarred him for life. It's as cathartic as it is funny" (LA Weekly)

iv) [The Treatment](#)

In-depth interviews with the most innovative and influential people working in entertainment, art, and pop culture.

v) NPR Code Switch

NPR's *Code Switch* is hosted by a team of seven journalists covering race, ethnicity and culture. According to their website, "Over the next few decades, people of color will come to compose a majority of the country's population, a transition that's already happened among the nation's youngest residents."

Code Switch covers that transition and other topics with the, "depth, nuance, intelligence and comprehensiveness they deserve."

vi) 2 Dope Queens

Hosted by Jessica Williams (formerly of *The Daily Show*) and comedian Phoebe Robinson, *2 Dope Queens* features interviews with comedians, "about sex, romance, race, hair journeys, living in New York and Billy Joel". The podcast is available on [WYNC's](#) website and [iTunes](#).

NB. If you pursue the podcast option you should develop a working script for what you would like to cover in the podcast, blog, etc. *and/or* a link or file to your audiovisual production.

In other words, some submissions may create a podcast. Others may be largely aspirational (i.e. what you would like to do if you had more access to technological resources and support, access to an actor who might impersonate a historical character, the ability to time travel 😊, etc.).

3) An academic essay

Class Participation

All students are expected to contribute actively to the success of seminar discussion by reading the required material and engaging the topics in class.

Your participation mark will be largely based on the quality of your contribution to the discussion (not necessarily the quantity). Contribution can take a variety of forms, including asking questions for clarification, making connections between the assigned readings for the week and previous readings, and providing a critical analysis of the readings. The first step to achieving a strong participation grade is to be sure to read the required material before the discussion session.

Contributing to the seminar group is not limited to discussion during the videoconference. Students also have the opportunity to pose questions, comments and discussion points on the CuLearn site. You may contribute comments before and after the class to CuLearn. These comments may be brief. For example, you may post a link to a site or advert that relates to the

readings and helps illustrate a point or deepen our analysis. Or you may develop a tweet or short video that might help disseminate the points raised in the readings or class discussion. More substantial comments or reflections, which place the readings in historical or geographical context, are also encouraged.

Evaluation of an academic essay

“A”: This is an outstanding answer in the context of module/topic aims and objectives with respect to: synthesis of material, innovative use of material, originality and critical ability. It demonstrates thorough understanding of topic with wide evidence of additional study and outstanding communication and presentation skills. It begins with a thesis that is not only clear in itself but it is also clearly and effectively introduced. The thesis paragraph will be sophisticated in its approach to the subject matter. The entire essay will consistently pursue its argument and will demonstrate an interpretive command of the ideas and methods involved in the assignment. It has something important to say and says it extremely well. Each part of the essay will move logically and clearly to the next part; there will be no problems in development or coherence. Conclusions will not merely repeat what has already been said. Excellent grammar and usage contribute to clarity and precision of the essay. There will be only minor and occasional technical errors: infrequent typos, an inconsistent verb tense in a difficult context, one or two poor word choices, or an unsuccessful attempt at rhetorical flourish, for example.

A “B” essay establishes a clear thesis, if not an outstanding one, and pursues it consistently. It provides a full answer to the question with thorough understanding of topic, substantial detail supported by reasoned argument, with evidence of further study. It suffers from no more than one or two factual errors, conceptual inconsistencies, non sequiturs, or problems in development and coherence, but not such as to impair the clear development of the main argument: Occasional difficulty with word choice, one or two awkward syntactic sequences, overuse of passive voice, a few errors in punctuation and spelling.

A “C” essay rather ineffectively establishes a central thesis and only partially develops the argument. It is weak in organization and expression. Though the essay will show an understanding of the basic ideas and information involved in the assignment, it will make errors in interpretation or confuse significant facts. It will tend in important places to rely on unsupported generalizations or undeveloped ideas. There will be more than a few problems in diction or word choice. The essay is also likely to contain several unclear sentences, awkward transitions, and three or four basic sentence faults. It also tends to rely exclusively on course material.

A “D” essay does not clearly introduce or define its central thesis and thus tends to be discursive. Its main idea is likely to emerge haphazardly. Transitions will be awkward or unclear and paragraphs will tend to be brief, dis-unified, and underdeveloped. Significant factual or conceptual errors will show inadequate command of course materials. The essay will tend to oversimplify its subject matter and to commit several logical fallacies. The writing will be unclear because of serious basic sentence faults, clichés, colloquialisms, or very inexact word choices. It may also include irrelevant material.

An “F” essay lacks a discernable central thesis and shows little or no understanding of the basic ideas involved in the assignment. A main idea is likely never to emerge. The essay may make one or two weak attempts to support generalizations. It has a tendency to list fact or make broad statements without transition or development. There is clear evidence that the writer has not understood the readings, discussions, or assignment. There will be extensive instances of basic sentence faults, diction problems, logical fallacies, and incoherent paragraphing.

Please note that all written work must be typed in 12-point Times New Roman font, double spaced with standard 1-inch margins. You are encouraged to use the Chicago style for citations but may choose another style used in your respective disciplines. See http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html or <http://www.carleton.ca/history/resources/essay-guide/> for a quick guide to citation style.

Completion of Work:

Deadlines are final, although leeway will be given for extraordinary circumstances (medical documentation is required for illness). Except in the case of an exceptional documented emergency, no extensions will be granted in the 24 hours before an assignment is due. All requests for extensions should be made to the instructor.

Work can be submitted on Culearn. Any item received after the due date will receive a late penalty of one grade point per day, i.e. an essay which received an A grade will be awarded an A- if it is one day late, a B+ if two days late and so on.

REGULATIONS

COPIES OF WRITTEN WORK SUBMITTED

Always retain for yourself a copy of all essays, term papers, written assignments or take-home tests submitted in your courses.

PLAGIARISM

The University Senate defines plagiarism as “*presenting, whether intentionally or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one’s own.*” This can include:

- 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;
- submitting a take home examination, essay, laboratory report or other assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, or paraphrased material, concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another’s data or research findings;
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another’s works and/or failing to use quotation marks;
- handing in "substantially the same piece of work for academic credit more than once without prior written permission of the course instructor in which the submission occurs."

Plagiarism is a serious offence which cannot be resolved directly with 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.

COURSE SHARING WEBSITES and COPYRIGHT

Classroom teaching and learning activities, including lectures, discussions, presentations, etc., by both instructors and students, are copy protected and remain the intellectual property of their respective author(s). All course materials, including PowerPoint presentations, outlines, and other materials, are also protected by copyright and remain the intellectual property of their respective author(s).

Students registered in the course may take notes and make copies of course materials for their own educational use only. Students are not permitted to reproduce or distribute lecture notes and course materials publicly for commercial or non-commercial purposes without express written consent from the copyright holder(s).

STATEMENT ON CLASS CONDUCT

The Carleton University Human Rights Policies and Procedures affirm that all members of the University community share a responsibility to:

- promote equity and fairness,
- respect and value diversity,
- prevent discrimination and harassment, and
- preserve the freedom of its members to carry out responsibly their scholarly work without threat of interference.

Carleton University Equity Services states that “every member of the University community has a right to study, work and live in a safe environment free of discrimination or harassment”. [In May of 2001 Carleton University’s Senate and Board of Governors approved the Carleton University Human Rights Policies and Procedures. The establishment of these policies and procedures was the culmination of the efforts of the Presidential Advisory Committee on Human Rights and a Human Rights Implementation Committee.]

GRADING SYSTEM

Letter grades assigned in this course will have the following percentage equivalents:

A+ = 90-100 (12)	B = 73-76 (8)	C - = 60-62 (4)	F= 0-49 (0) – Failure: no academic credit
A = 85-89 (11)	B - = 70-72 (7)	D+ = 57-59 (3)	
A - = 80-84 (10)	C+ = 67-69 (6)	D = 53-56 (2)	
B+ = 77-79 (9)	C = 63-66 (5)	D - = 50-52 (1)	

The following additional final course grades may be assigned by instructors:

- DEF Official deferral of final exam (see "Petitions to Defer")
- GNA Grade not available. This is used when there is an allegation of an academic offence. The notation is replaced with the appropriate grade for the course as soon as it is available.
- IP In Progress – a notation (IP) assigned to a course by a faculty member when: At the undergraduate level, an undergraduate thesis or course has not been completed by the end of the period of registration.
- WDN Withdrawn. No academic credit, no impact on the CGPA. WDN is a permanent notation that appears on the official transcript for students who withdraw after the full fee adjustment date in each term (noted in the Academic Year section of the Calendar each term). Students may withdraw on or before the last day of classes.

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.

WITHDRAWAL WITHOUT ACADEMIC PENALTY

September 30, 2020: Last day for a full fee adjustment when withdrawing from **fall** and **fall/winter (full year)** courses (financial withdrawal). Withdrawals after this date will create no financial change to fall term fees and will result in a permanent notation of WDN appearing on your official transcript.

December 11, 2020: Last day for academic withdrawal from **fall** courses.

April 9, 2021: Last day for academic withdrawal from **fall/winter (full year)** courses.

REQUESTS FOR ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request the processes are as follows:

Pregnancy obligation: write to the professor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details see <https://carleton.ca/equity/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf>

Religious obligation: write to the professor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details see <https://carleton.ca/equity/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf>

Accommodation for Student Activities: write to the professor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for

accommodation is known to exist. For more details see <https://carleton.ca/senate/wp-content/uploads/Accommodation-for-Student-Activities-1.pdf>

Survivors of sexual violence: As a community, Carleton University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working and living environment where sexual violence will not be tolerated, and its survivors are supported through academic accommodations as per Carleton's Sexual Violence Policy. For more information about the services available at the university and to obtain information about sexual violence and/or support, visit: <https://carleton.ca/sexual-violence-support/wp-content/uploads/Sexual-Violence-Policy-December-1-2016.pdf>

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send me your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (if applicable). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the PMC website for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (if applicable).

PETITIONS TO DEFER

Students unable to write a final examination because of illness or other circumstances beyond their control or whose performance on an examination has been impaired by such circumstances may apply within five working days to the Registrar's Office for permission to write a deferred examination. The request must be fully and specifically supported by a medical certificate or other relevant documentation. Only deferral petitions submitted to the Registrar's Office will be considered.

CONTACTS (613-520-2600, phone ext.)

- Registrar's Office (3500) registrar@carleton.ca
- Academic Advising Centre academicadvising@carleton.ca
- Paul Menton Centre (6608) pmc@carleton.ca
- Centre for Student Academic Support – Study Skills, Writing Tutorials, Bounce Back csas@carleton.ca

Application for Graduation Deadlines

- Spring Graduation (June): April 1
- Fall Graduation (November): September 1
- Winter Graduation (February): December 1