

**FACULTY OF ARTS**  
**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH**

**ENGLISH 509.38-01**

**Fall 2012**

**COURSE TITLE: Studies in Canadian Literature: Canadian Magic Realism**

**Instructor: Prof. Suzette Mayr**

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**Office hours: Tuesday/Thursday 2-3:00 pm (or by appointment)**

**Homepage/course website: <http://english.ucalgary.ca/profiles/suzette-mayr>**

**Course Description:**

Prerequisite: One full-course equivalent in English at the 400 level, or consent of the Department.

Originally a term coined by German art critic Franz Roh to describe a movement within European visual art in the 1920's – *magischer realismus* – the literary genre known as “magic realism” or “magical realism” has come to encompass a kind of literary mode practiced by writers all over the world.

Although Latin American writers including Gabriel García Márquez, Isabel Allende and Julio Cortázar – the writers associated with the Latin American “Boom” – are regarded as the foremost practitioners in the genre, magic realism has also been used to great effect by other writers who live in cultures that are regarded as on the peripheries or “margins” of the former empire. Its status as what Homi Bhabha calls “the literary language of the emergent postcolonial world” (Introduction, *Nation and Narration*) makes magic realism a form that is ideal for internationally-known Canadian writers such as Robert Kroetsch who have helped transform magic realism into a legitimately Canadian genre that uniquely articulates key aspects of Canadian culture and its concerns. Using a postcolonial theoretical approach, students in this course will read a variety of texts that set out the term(s) around magic realism as a concept, its history and its parameters, and will examine Canadian magic realist fiction, drama, and film.

**Texts and Readings (all texts are available from the University of Calgary bookstore unless indicated otherwise):**

English 509-01 Course pack (available from Bound and Copied – 1<sup>st</sup> floor of MacEwan Hall)

Kroetsch, Robert. *What the Crow Said*

Blais, Marie-Claire. *Mad Shadows*

Moses, Daniel David. *Big Buck City*

Mootoo, Shani. *Cereus Blooms at Night*

Choyce, Lesley. *The Republic of Nothing*

Davie, Michael. *Fishing for Bacon*

Watson, Sheila. *The Double Hook*

Dir. Thom Fitzgerald. *The Hanging Garden* (film - will be provided by instructor)

### Email and Electronic Submissions Policy:

I am happy to reply to short, specific questions via email and will answer as promptly as possible (usually it takes me approximately one week to respond to a given email). However, I cannot guarantee that you will have a reply within a specific amount of time. If you have detailed questions on the course material, it is more appropriate to see me during my office hours, or make an appointment to see me personally in my office.

### Assignments and Evaluation:

Readings will be assigned for most classes and I expect assigned work to have been read *before* we discuss it in class. Students will be assigned two major essays and one final, registrar-scheduled exam. Assignments are due in hard copy form at the *beginning* of class. Emailed assignments will not be accepted (unless specific arrangements have been made with the instructor prior to the submission, and only in exceptional circumstances). If you would like me to preview any of your assignments before you hand them in or if you want to discuss any class- or class assignment-related issues, please do not hesitate to come see me (note: I will not edit your work, but I will discuss more general, topic- and writing-related issues with you).

All assignments must be completed in order to receive a passing grade in the course. The only exception to this is pop quizzes, which will be administered randomly. The specific criteria for the class are as follows:

Class participation and pop quizzes	5%
Essay #1 (1600-2300 words – approx. 5-7 pages) due Tues., Oct. 16	30%
Essay #2 (2600-3300 words – approx. 8-10 pages) due Tues., Nov. 20	35%
Final exam (Registrar-scheduled: 10-19 Dec. 2012)	30%

Students must be available for examinations up to the last day of the examination period.

Assignments submitted after the deadline will be penalized (with the loss of a third of a grade, eg: an A- to B+) for each day (not class) that the assignment is overdue.

*Please make every effort to take assignments directly to the instructor. If it is not possible to do so, take your assignment to SS 1152 and put it in the drop box. Your assignment will be date-stamped and placed in the instructor's mailbox. **It is your responsibility to keep a copy of all assignments in case of loss by any cause. Assignments cannot be returned by staff in the Department office.***

### Grading system:

All assignments are marked with a letter grade and are averaged according to the corresponding four-point value specified by the undergraduate grading system in the university calendar (<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/f-1.html>):

A+/A (4.0); A- (3.7); B+ (3.3); B (3.0); B- (2.7); C+ (2.3); C (2.0); C-(1.7); D+ (1.3); D (1.0); F (0)

It is at the instructor's discretion to round off either upward or downward to determine a final grade when the average of term work and final examinations is between two letter grades.

**A+: Outstanding Work**

This essay has all of the components of an essay that fits in the “A range” category (see below), but is at a publishable or near-publishable level in that the ideas are wholly original, secondary sources are utilized to the best effect, presentation (including formatting and language) is impeccable, and the writing and ideas are absolutely clear and free of inconsistencies.

**A range: Excellent Work**

The essay’s thesis is clearly stated and obvious; ideas are original and focused; all main points are clearly stated and supported with specific examples from the primary and/or secondary texts; ideas are organized logically and flow easily; research draws from reputable sources and uses the sources appropriately; writing has either minimal or no spelling and grammatical errors; works cited page in good order. This paper goes above and beyond the regular requirements for the assignment.

**B range: Good Work**

The essay’s topic is clear, and the essay has a definite thesis; the ideas may show some originality; specific examples from the primary text (and research sources if required) are used to support the main arguments; spelling and grammatical errors are at a minimum; the research sources used (if required) are for the most part reputable; perhaps some sections could be more clearly stated but clarity overall is not a problem; formatting errors are at a minimum.

**C range: Satisfactory Work**

The essay’s thesis is not as clear as it could be or is incomplete; the ideas are not necessarily original but are still competent; the language could definitely use improvement in terms of spelling and grammatical errors; the essay has occasional muddled logic; some points not clearly supported by evidence from the text; the essay contains other errors that perhaps get in the way of keeping the central argument as tight as it could be; the research sources (if required) are not cited properly or consistently; too many formatting errors are distracting for the reader.

**D range: Minimal Pass**

The language in this essay is often unclear because of grammatical errors; the thesis is unclear or muddled or missing; the topic wanders into unrelated or extremely tangential territory; the research sources (if required) are questionable or nonexistent; the ideas are unsupported or unfocused; the flow between ideas or logic in the argument is hard to discern; sloppy formatting.

**F: Unsatisfactory**

Writing has no cohesion and ideas are scattered or unclear; main topic hard to discern; no textual support for central arguments; major grammatical errors interfere with clarity.

**Plagiarism:**

Using any source whatsoever without clearly documenting it is a serious academic offense. Consequences include failure on the assignment, failure in the course and possible suspension or expulsion from the university. Please refer to the following information and make sure you are familiar with the statement below on plagiarism.

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k-2-1.html>

**Scribe and Muse Club for English Students:**

The Scribe and Muse Reading and Writing Club (SMRWC) fosters and champions reading and writing

through community service, leadership, and engagement. We strive to enhance the academic and social experience of undergraduate students by promoting academic excellence and interaction between students, faculty, and the community, through social, cultural, and academic events. <http://english.ucalgary.ca/content/scribe-and-muse-reading-and-writing-club>  
Our email address is [smrwc@ucalgary.ca](mailto:smrwc@ucalgary.ca).

### **English Department Website:**

For more information about courses, programs, policies, events and contacts in the Department of English, please go to our website at <http://english.ucalgary.ca>.

### **Writing support:**

The Student Success Centre offers both online and workshop writing support for U of C students. <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>

### **Follow the Department of English on Facebook & Twitter:**



### **Academic regulations and schedules:**

Consult the *Calendar* for course information, university and faculty regulations, dates, deadlines and schedules, student, faculty and university rights and responsibilities. The homepage for the University Calendar is <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/index.htm>

### **Guidelines on e-mail Etiquette:**

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/it/help/articles/email/etiquette>

### **Grade appeals:**

Consult the following University *Calendar* link and request advice from the English Department office, SS 1152. Please note that “mere dissatisfaction with a decision is not sufficient grounds for the appeal of a grade or other academic decision.” <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/i.html>

### **Deferral of term work and final examinations:**

Should you require an extension for completion of term papers or assignments beyond the deadline of five days after the end of lectures, an Application of Deferment of Term Work form must be completed. The University also has regulations governing the deferral of final examinations. See *Calendar*: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-6.html>, <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-7.html>.

### **Academic accommodation:**

It is a student’s responsibility to request academic accommodation. If you are a student with a disability who may require academic accommodation and if you have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre, please contact their office at 220-8237. Your academic accommodation letters should be provided to your instructor no later than fourteen (14) days after the commencement of this course.

Students who have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre are not eligible for formal academic accommodation. <http://www.ucalgary.ca/drc/>

**Emergency Evacuation/Assembly Points:** <http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints/>;

**Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act:** <http://www.ucalgary.ca/legalservices/foip/>

**“Safewalk” Program:**

Campus Security will escort individuals day or night: call 220-5333 for assistance. Use any campus phone, emergency phone or the yellow phone located at most parking lot pay booths.

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/safewalk/>

**Faculty of Arts Program Advising and Student Information Resources:**

Have a question, but not sure where to start? The new Faculty of Arts Program Information Centre (PIC) is your information resource for everything in Arts! Drop in at SS110, call us at 403-220-3580 or email us at [artsads@ucalgary.ca](mailto:artsads@ucalgary.ca). You can also visit the Faculty of Arts website at <http://arts.ucalgary.ca/undergraduate> which has detailed information on common academic concerns.

For program planning and advice, contact the Student Success Centre (formerly the Undergraduate programs Office) at (403) 220-5881 or visit them in their new space on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor of the Taylor Family Digital Library.

For registration (add/drop/swap), paying fees and assistance with your Student Centre, contact Enrolment Services at (403) 210-ROCK [7625] or visit them at the MacKimmie Library Block.

**Contact for Students Union Representatives for the Faculty of Arts:**

[arts1@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts1@su.ucalgary.ca), [arts2@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts2@su.ucalgary.ca), [arts3@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts3@su.ucalgary.ca), [arts4@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts4@su.ucalgary.ca)

**Contact for Students Ombudsman’s Office:** <http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds>

## PLAGIARISM

*Plagiarism is an extremely serious offence. Please read the following information carefully. The penalty routinely recommended by the English Department for documented plagiarism is failure of the course in which the offence occurred; academic probation is also routinely applied at the Faculty level. Suspension or expulsion can result from severe or repeated plagiarism.*

The University *Calendar* states:

1. **Plagiarism** - Essentially plagiarism involves submitting or presenting work in a course as if it were the student's own work done expressly for that particular course when, in fact, it is not. Most commonly plagiarism exists when:

- (a) the work submitted or presented was done, in whole or in part, by an individual other than the one submitting or presenting the work (this includes having another impersonate the student or otherwise substituting the work of another for one's own in an examination or test),
- (b) parts of the work are taken from another source without reference to the original author,
- (c) the whole work (e.g., an essay) is copied from another source, and/or,
- (d) a student submits or presents work in one course which has also been submitted in another course (although it may be completely original with that student) without the knowledge of or prior agreement of the instructor involved.

While it is recognized that scholarly work often involves reference to the ideas, data and conclusions of other scholars, intellectual honesty requires that such references be explicitly and clearly noted.

Plagiarism occurs when direct quotations are taken from a source without specific acknowledgement, or when original ideas or data from the source are not acknowledged. Citing your sources in a bibliography is not enough, because a bibliography does not establish which parts of a student's work are taken from other sources. MLA (Modern Language Association) documentation or other recognized forms of citation must be used for this purpose. Advice on adequate documentation can be found at the following web sites:

<http://www.dianahacker.com/resdoc/>

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>

## DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH STATEMENT ON PRINCIPLES OF CONDUCT

According to the University *Calendar*, (<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/j.html>)

“The University of Calgary community has undertaken to be guided by the following statements of purpose and values: to promote free inquiry and debate, to act as a community of scholars, ..., to respect, appreciate, and encourage diversity, [and] to display care and concern for community”. The Department of English, like the university as a whole, is committed to a “positive and productive learning and working environment.” This environment is characterized by appreciation and encouragement of diversity and respect for the dignity of all persons: students, support staff, and faculty. The department will not tolerate unacceptable behaviour, such as threatening gestures, threatening or abusive verbal or written communication (including e-mails), or any conduct that “seriously disrupts the lawful education and related activities of students and/or university staff”. Any cases of such misconduct should be reported immediately to the department Head, who, depending on the nature and severity of the incident, may then take further appropriate action.