

THE UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY  
 FACULTY OF ARTS  
 DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH  
 Winter 2013  
 (MWF: 11:00 -11:50 - SS 1153)  
 COURSE OUTLINE

**English 515-01 (Topic 03)**  
***Postcolonial Studies/International English Literature:***  
**POSTCOLONIAL COSMOPOLITANISM**

*Instructor:* Dr. Victor J. Ramraj  
*Telephone:* 220-4664 (Voice-mail for messages)  
*Office hours:* Wed 2:00-3:00, and by appointment.

*E-Mail:* ramraj@ucalgary.ca  
*Office:* SS 1124  
*Fax:* 289-1123

This course focuses on two fundamental issues in examining some representative postcolonial texts: to what extent do they focus on the exotic, the different (socioculturally and historically), the indigenous as opposed to the common, the “universal.” And to what extent are they influenced by Western/imperial influences in forms and themes? Are postcolonial/postmodern theories of mimicry, indoctrination, or cosmopolitanism applicable in assessing these texts? We’ll explore cosmopolitanism in relation to the controversial issue of universality (and commonality vs cultural and historical particulars). In postcolonial studies, as in other areas of the humanities, universalism is a contentious concept. Once a central criterion for judging the worth of a literary text, it is now discredited as a strategy of European imperialism. Writers, such as Chinua Achebe, spurn the European conception of universalism but not the idea of human commonality. He advises the postcolonial writer not “to run after universality,” noting that if writers are faithful to their particular experiences, “there is enough that is in common between peoples, between one people and another, for what he says to be appreciated.” Taking our lead from these writers and theorists, we shall examine closely four novels, about ten short stories, and a handful of poems and essays.

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

**REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS**

(Any paper edition will do)

Gil Courtemanche. *A Sunday in the Pool at Kigali* (2003)

V. S. Naipaul, *The Enigma of Arrival* (1987)

Arundhati Roy. *The God of Small Things* (1997)

Denis Williams. *The Third Temptation* (1968)

Victor J. Ramraj, ed. *Concert of Voices: An Anthology of World Writing in English*. 2nd Edition. Peterborough, ON: Broadview, 2009

**SEMINAR (20%):**

You will be asked to give a short seminar presentation (worth 20%) on a topic of your choice on an assigned text.

## NATURE AND CONDUCT OF SEMINARS

1. Your seminar presentation should be between 15-20 minutes. You should be prepared to answer questions and initiate discussions.
2. You should provide the class with an outline of your presentation in annotated or essay form. (See sample outline to be distributed).
3. You are free to take whatever approach you wish, keeping in mind the course description (see above). You could analyse any aspects of the texts related to issues of commonality and cultural/historical particulars. You should establish briefly your theoretical position. (You will find *The Post-colonial Studies Reader*, edited by Ashcroft et al., useful.) You could make allusions or comparative references to what was said in previous seminars. You should analyse closely particular brief or extended sections of texts to support your arguments and claims.
4. Your presentation(s) would constitute the first part of our 1¼ hour class; the second part of which will be given over to further class discussion and to my comments that will fill in gaps and complement what was said in the first part.

### TERM PAPERS (30% & 40%)

Two term papers are required.

#### FIRST TERM PAPER (30%)

Your first term paper, worth 30% of your final grade, is due the week after Reading Week. You are required to write an essay of 8-10 pages, examining comparatively any issues relevant to the course topic as raised in a handful of contiguous short texts (poems and stories), at least two of which must be from our prescribed anthology. You may write on texts on which you gave your seminar presentation (see second term paper). You are to choose your own topic. I will suggest topics in class or in meetings with individual students.

#### SECOND TERM PAPER (40%)

The second term paper, worth 40% of the final grade, is due in the last week of the semester. You are required to write a comparative essay of 12-15 pages, examining any issues relevant to the course topic as raised in any two novels (at least one must be from the required text list). You could incorporate your seminar presentation (*if you did not do so in your first paper*). You are to choose your own topic. I will suggest topics in class or in meetings with individual students.

Note:

1. Late papers will be penalized grades and will be graded only, not marked.
2. You are advised to retain copies of all papers submitted to your instructors.
3. Your papers, printed or legibly written, should adhere to the format and documentation outlined in *A Student's Guide to the Presentation of Essays* (also accessible also online on the University's webpage <[www.ucalgary.ca/UofC/eduweb/grammar/guide.htm](http://www.ucalgary.ca/UofC/eduweb/grammar/guide.htm)>) or the *MLA Handbook*. Only in special circumstances will electronic submission of assignments be accepted.
4. Your paper will be marked for the strength of its argument, the logical development of its argument, the textual support of its argument, the clarity of its organization and expression (which should be free of major grammar, syntax, and spellings errors).
5. Papers showing evidence of plagiarism will be given an F grade (see the attached statement on plagiarism). Please include at the end of your essay this signed statement:  
*"I verify that I have read the University of Calgary's statement on plagiarism, that I am the author of this essay/term paper, and that I have acknowledged clearly all debts and borrowings."*

*(Please make all efforts to get assignments directly to me. If it is not possible to do so, take your assignment to SS1152 and put it in the drop-box, where your assignment will be date-stamped and placed in my mailbox. Please keep a copy of your essay in case of loss by any cause. Assignments **cannot be returned** by staff in the Department office.)*

### **END-OF-TERM TEST (10%)**

A 50-minute in-class test, requiring you to write a short essay on a topic related to postcolonial cosmopolitanism, April 15<sup>th</sup> (last day of class).

There is no Registrar-scheduled exam in this course.

**NOTE: Students must give the seminar presentations (20%), submit the two term papers (30% and 40%), and write the test (10%) to qualify for a passing grade in this course.**

### **Grading System:**

University of Calgary's 4 point system is used in this course:

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)

### **Late assignment policy:**

Assignments submitted after the deadline may be penalized with the loss of a third of grade (for example: A- to B+) for each day late (exemption in extenuating circumstances.)

### **Student's Guide to the Presentation of Essays:**

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/UofC/eduweb/grammar/guide.htm>

### **Plagiarism:**

Using any source whatsoever without clearly documenting it is a serious academic offence. 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 *read the attached statement on plagiarism.*

<[http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/how/How\\_LB.htm](http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/how/How_LB.htm)>

Please include at the end of your essay this signed statement:

*"I verify that I have read the University of Calgary's statement on plagiarism, that I am the author of this essay/term paper, and that I have acknowledged clearly all debts and borrowings."*

### **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.

**SEMINAR SCHEDULE (Tentative)**

## January

- 09-11 Introductory lecture/discussion:  
Issues of Commonality, universality, cultural/historical particulars
- 14-18 Introductory lecture/discussion
- 21-25 Stories, essays, and poems,
- 28-01 Stories, essays, and poems

## February

- 04-08 Stories, essays, and poems
- 11-15 Stories, essays, and poems
- 18-22 Reading Week 17 -24 (*no classes*)
- 25-01 Roy  
First term Paper due this week.

## March

- 04-08 Roy/Coutemanche
- 11-15 Courtemanche
- 18-22 Naipaul
- 25-29 Naipaul/Williams (*29<sup>th</sup> Good Friday – No classes*)

## April

- 01-05 Williams
- 08-12 Recapitulation
- 15 End-of Term Test (10%) (Term ends on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup>)  
Second Term paper due this week.  
(*19-30th: Examination Period. There is no Registrar scheduled examination in this course.*)

