

FACULTY OF ARTS
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

English 517-S01

Spring 2020

Otherness and Truth

Instructor: Dr. Shaobo Xie
Class time: Tuesday and Thursday 1:00-3:45 p.m.
Location: Via zoom
Office: SS 1012
Office hours: Wednesday 11:00-noon and by appointment
Telephone: 403-220-5478
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Course Description:

One of the defining features of contemporary critical thought is its infinite openness to the Other. In Foucault's view, otherness is the hallmark of truth, and, as critics like Frédéric Gros and Barry Smart have pointed out, he never failed to anchor his concept of truth in a certain notion of otherness, ceaselessly formulating otherness without domesticating it into doctrine. At the heart of the legacies left behind by Levinas and Derrida is their infinite respect for otherness. Alain Badiou notes in *Philosophy in the Present*, "The philosopher is always a stranger, clothed in his new thoughts," for genuine philosophical commitment is "marked by its internal foreignness" (21). This course explores such internal foreignness as encountered in a selection of leading critical thinkers, situating them as a constellation of figures of radical otherness. The seminar readings and discussions will be structured along the following questions: Why is openness to the other the gateway to the true? Why is it that truth has to be established from the perspective of the other world or the other life? To what extent might critical thought's recalcitrant otherness translate into resistance to neoliberalism, which as a new form of governing rationality submits all spheres of social life to the rule of the market, transforming human beings into market actors? In what sense does literature explicitly or implicitly foster readers' appreciation and respect for other ways of being human and other modes of making sense? How do the novels read on the course offer different paths to inscribing otherness and truth?

Texts:

Michel Foucault, *The Courage of Truth*
Walter Benjamin, "Theses on the Philosophy of History"
Emmanuel Levinas, *Entre Nous: On Thinking-of-the-Other*
Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, "The Desiring Machines"
Jacques Derrida, *Specters of Marx*
Jean-François Lyotard, "The Other's Rights"
Edward Said, *Representations of the Intellectual*
Alain Badiou and Slavoj Žižek, *Philosophy in the Present*
Jacques Rancière, *Dissensus: On Politics and Aesthetics*
Bruno Latour, *We Have Never Been Modern*
Giorgio Agamben, "What Is the Contemporary?"

Donna Haraway, "'A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century'"

Judith Butler, *Precarious Life*

Gayatri Spivak, "Translation as Culture" *Parallax*, 6:1, 13-24

Samuel Beckett, *The Unnamable*

J. M. Coetzee, *Foe*

Tayeb Salih, *Season of Migration to the North*

Toni Morrison, *Beloved*

Assignments:

Review essay	25%
Seminar presentation	
(Written version due one week after presentation)	25%
Critical essay	40%
Participation	10%

Each student will make a seminar presentation. The written assignments will be a review essay (1500 words) and a research paper (3500 words).

Students must submit all assignments to qualify for a passing grade. All take-home written assignments must be typewritten and double-spaced. You should use a 12 point type-size and a readable font. Take-home essays must adhere to the format and documentation outlined in the *MLA Handbook* (8th Edition).

All written assignments are to be submitted to the D2L dropboxes. Except in cases of illness or crisis, late papers will be penalized a fraction of a grade per day (i.e., an A paper handed in a day late will receive an A-; an A paper handed in two days late will receive a B+).

Grading System:

Letter Grade	Percentage	Grade Point Value
A+	90+%	4.0
A	85-89%	4.0
A-	80-84%	3.7
B+	77-79%	3.3
B	74-76%	3.0
B-	70-73%	2.7
C+	67-69%	2.3
C	64-66%	2.0
C-	60-63%	1.7
D+	55-59%	1.3
D	50-54%	1.0
F	0-49%	0

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-5.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/scribe-and-muse-english-club>.

Our email address is smecuofc@gmail.com.

English Department Website:

For more information about courses, programs, policies, events and contacts in the Department of English, please go to our website at <https://arts.ucalgary.ca/english>. Please note that the course outlines posted on the English Department website constitute the official course outline for purposes of appeals. Students should verify any hard copies against this posted version. For courses which employ numerical grades, the official departmental percentage to letter grade conversion scale is also posted on the department website.

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>

Library and Research Support:

Melanie Boyd, Librarian for English, offers research support to students, including strategies for finding articles, books, and other library materials. Contact: maboyn@ucalgary.ca.

Find The English Pages research guide here:

https://library.ucalgary.ca/sb.php?subject_id=52619

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>

Grade appeals:

Consult the following University Calendar link and request advice from the English Department office by emailing karen.preddy@ucalgary.ca. 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>

Student Accommodations: ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS

The student accommodation policy can be found at:

ucalgary.ca/access/accommodations/policy.

Students needing an Accommodation because of a Disability or medical condition should communicate this need to Student Accessibility Services in accordance with the Procedure for Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy.

Students needing an Accommodation based on a Protected Ground other than Disability, should communicate this need, preferably in writing, to the course instructor.

The full policy on Student Accommodations is available

at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy.pdf>.

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/legalservices/foip>

Faculty of Arts Program Advising and Student Information Resources:

Have a question, but not sure where to start? The new Arts Students' Centre (ASC) is your information resource for everything in Arts! Call at 403-220-3580 or email us at

ascarts@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 3rd 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, arts2@su.ucalgary.ca, arts3@su.ucalgary.ca, arts4@su.ucalgary.ca

Contact for Students Ombudsman's Office: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/student-services/ombuds/role>

Universal Student Ratings of Instruction (USRI):

"At the University of Calgary, feedback provided by students through the Universal Student Ratings of Instruction (USRI) survey provides valuable information to help with evaluating

instruction, enhancing learning and teaching, and selecting courses (www.ucalgary.ca/usri). Your responses make a difference – please participate in USRI Surveys."

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

Students who are absent from class assessments (tests, participation activities, or other assignments) should inform their instructors as soon as possible. . If the reason provided for the absence is acceptable, instructors may decide that any arrangements made can take forms other than make-up tests or assignments. For example, the weight of a missed grade may be added to another assignment or test. For information on possible forms of documentation, including statutory declarations, please see <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/m-1.html>.

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH STATEMENT ON PRINCIPLES OF CONDUCT

According to the University Calendar; <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k-2.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.