ENGLISH 251-L04:
The Discursive North in Canadian Literature
Winter 2020

Instructor: Chris Brown
Email: christopher.brown1@ucalgary.ca

Class Location(s): MW Room SA 015
F Room SA 017

Office: SS 1151
Office Hours: W 14:00-15:30 OR by appointment

Email Policy: I’m happy to reply to brief, specific questions over email and will do so as quickly as possible – usually within a few days, but sometimes longer depending on the time of semester. If you have complicated questions or would like to speak about something more in-depth, please come to my office hours or arrange a time to meet me in person.

Course description:
Whether it be geographically, symbolically, commercially, or ideologically, Canada has staked part of its identity within the North long before its national anthem proclaimed the “true north strong and free.” Yet despite Canada’s preoccupation with its own “northly-ness,” its actual northern territories are often misrepresented, caricaturized, or forgotten altogether within the scope of the Canadian consciousness. We might have an idea of where is the North, but how often do we ask what, or more importantly, who, is the North? One of the ways we can engage with these questions is through how the North is rendered in writing – what Sherrill Grace calls the “discursive formation of North.” By engaging with texts ranging from early exploration narratives to traditional oral expressions of Inuit storytellers, this course offers a survey of how literatures have responded to the North over the course of Canadian history. While this course aims to introduce students to the kinds of narratives both settler and Indigenous peoples have created to evoke the North, the hope above all is to reflect upon the colonial impact settlers have had upon the North, its land, and its peoples.

This course will include instruction on close reading and critical writing and provide opportunities for students to develop both their writing skills and their analytical methodologies.

Required Texts:
(available at the U of C bookstore)
- Marie Clements, Burning Vision (play)
- Elizabeth Hay, Late Nights on Air (novel)
- Adam Shoalts, Beyond the Trees: A Journey Alone Across Canada’s Arctic (non-fiction)
- Tanya Tagaq, Split Tooth (novel)
Assignments and Evaluation:

***NOTE*** Any readings assigned for a given week must be read BEFORE we discuss them in class. I have tried to break up longer texts into smaller portions throughout the semester, so although I might not require you to have read an entire novel for any given week, you must at least read to the point I’ve assigned up to.

Grade Distribution:

- **Response Paper** (250-400 words) 5% due Jan. 24
- **Close Reading #1** (350-500 words) 10% due Feb. 14
- **Midterm Exam** (in class) 15%
- **Close Reading #2** (350-500 words) 10% due Mar. 20
- **Analytical Essay** (1250-1700 words) 20% due Apr. 8
- **Final Exam** (location TBA) 25%
- **Attendance & Participation** 15%

All assignments must be completed in order to receive a passing grade in this course.

**Response Paper:** This assignment requires you to write a brief reflection (250-400 words) on some aspect of the Canadian North as it pertains to you. Although this assignment does not require vigorous analysis or argumentation, it does ask for thoughtfulness in your response – be as detailed, introspective, and critical as possible. In other words, discuss how you relate to the North, whether it be through media, history, family ties, etc.

**Close Readings #1 and #2:** Each of these assignments requires you to write a 1-2 page (350-500 words) analytical response to one of the assigned texts in the course. Using evidence drawn directly from a given text, you will be expected to employ close reading methods to form an argument about some aspect – whether based in character, theme, history, narrative, etc – of text in order to demonstrate critical engagement with ideas and contexts discussed in class. Here, you will have the chance to practice and hone your thesis statement writing abilities for later assignments.

**Midterm Exam:** In an in-class (50 minute) exam, you will demonstrate your engagement with ideas and texts discussed in class. The exam will consist of multiple short-answer questions
and one long-answer question. Although quality of writing is important, the emphasis will be on analysis and attentiveness. 

Scheduled March 4th

Analytical Essay: This assignment requires you to write a 5-6 page (1250-1700 words) essay which engages with one of the major texts discussed in class. The structure of the paper will include all of the essential components of an analytical essay, including an introduction with a thesis statement, body paragraphs which respond to the two to three key points of your argument, and a conclusive paragraph. You may adapt an idea or argument from one of your Close Reading assignments, but it must be revised to show how you’ve advanced or deepened your initial analysis.

Scheduled TBA

Final Exam: In this long-form exam, you will demonstrate engagement with thematic, historical, cultural, and formal ideas discussed in class as they relate to course texts and our larger contextual discussions around the discursive formation of the Canadian North. The exam will consist of multiple-choice questions, passage analysis questions, multiple short-answer questions, and one long-answer question. This exam will be scheduled by the Registrar and will not be Open Book.

Attendance & Participation: I have allotted 15% of your final grade towards how engaged you are in class. Simply showing up does not constitute “attending” – you should always be present both physically and mentally. Attendance for this course is mandatory and will be recorded every class; one percent will be deducted for each class missed up to a maximum of 5 (after which, you will receive a zero out of 15%). As this class will include both active discussion and group activities, it is crucial that you attend to these, too: speak up! Speak out! If it’s clear you’re either uncooperative with other students or checked-out in lecture, I reserve the right to consider you absent from that day’s class.

*Use of Technology in Class*: Laptops are permitted for use in class, but please refrain from social media activity or any other device activity unrelated to course material. As stated above, attendance means being engaged, and phones have a funny way of transporting us to other places.

Late Assignments: Assignments handed in after the submission deadline will face a penalty deduction of a third of a grade per business day (from B+ to B, etc). Submissions will not be accepted after 10 days past a submission deadline.

All assignments should be handed in directly to the instructor in hardcopy. If it is not possible to do so, take your assignment to SS 1152 and put it in the dropbox. 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.

Classroom Etiquette: Students will use inclusive and appropriate language in class. English 251 is a place for trying out new ideas, exploring complex and risky topics and asking hard and sometimes uncomfortable questions. Students should feel free to make mistakes and be corrected in crucial moments of listening and learning. With that being said, there is absolutely zero tolerance for comments, demeanours, rhetorics or tones that belittle another individual or group within the classroom during discussion. It is my aim to create a safe space within the university classroom,
and all discriminatory remarks will NOT be tolerated – there is absolutely no room for sexist, racist, xenophobic, transphobic, homophobic, Islamophobic, ableist etc. language.

Additional Regulations:

- **Students must be available for examinations up to the last day of the examination period April 18-29, 2020.** [https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/academic-schedule.html](https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/academic-schedule.html)
- The instructor may ask for assignments to be submitted in hardcopy *and* digitally on D2L
- Students asking for assignment extensions the day before a due date will not be facilitated
- All assignments are to be written in MLA style. Please consult the Purdue Online Writing Lab website for any queries: [https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/mla_style/mla_formatting_and_style_guide/mla_formatting_and_style_guide.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/mla_style/mla_formatting_and_style_guide/mla_formatting_and_style_guide.html)

- **Grading system:** This course will use the four-point grading system as outlined in the University of Calgary’s academic Calendar. Rubrics will be posted on D2L for each assignment.

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<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<td>A+</td>
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<tr>
<td>85 – 89 %</td>
<td>A</td>
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<td>80 – 84 %</td>
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<td>77 – 79 %</td>
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<td>74 – 76 %</td>
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<tr>
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Please note that, according to the University Calendar (F.1) [https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/f-1.html](https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/f-1.html), instructors may use their discretion when rounding upwards or downwards when the average of term work and exams is between two letter grades.

Although the A+ is solely an honorific that entails no additional points in the four-point system, the course instructor will employ this mark to distinguish superlative work that exceeds expectations in style, correctness, intellectual depth and breadth, sophistication, and originality.

**A range:** Consistently excellent work
**B range:** Consistently good work
**C range:** Consistently average work
**D range:** Minimal pass
**F range:** No credit

**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](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


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](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](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: maboyd@ucalgary.ca.

Find The English Pages research guide here:

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

![Facebook & Twitter](https://via.placeholder.com/15)

**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](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, 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](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-6.html)
[http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-7.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

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 Arts Students’ Centre (ASC) is your information
resource for everything in Arts! Drop in at SS102, call us 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. Instructors may request that evidence in the form of documentation be provided. 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.

Updated Jan 2019