

Faculty of Arts/Department of English
English 379: American Slave Narratives, Then and Now
Dr. Faye Halpern

Winter 2021
T/Th 11-12:15 (we meet synchronously)

D2L: <https://d2l.ucalgary.ca/d2l/home/356973>

Office Hours: T, 1-2 | Zoom (see below for address)

Email: fhalpern@ucalgary.ca

Dr. Halpern answers email during regular business hours: Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm. Please allow up to 48 hours for a response.

Course Description

How did enslaved people fight against slavery through their own narratives of their lives in bondage? How do contemporary authors revise these earlier narratives? Readings include Frederick Douglass' *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* (a nineteenth-century slave narrative), Toni Morrison's *Beloved* (a neo-slave narrative), and Angie Thomas' *The Hate U Give*. Students will leave this course with an array of techniques for analyzing and appreciating literature, including recognizing the surface of a text and figuring out what lies beneath it; identifying meaningful patterns in a text; describing the significance of character, setting, perspective, and a variety of literary devices; and making connections between a text and its surrounding context. At the end of the course, students will have the chance to connect what they've learned about how authors have depicted enslavement to a current depiction of racial injustice. The course has no pre-requisites.

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

- ✓ Identify the conventions of slave narratives and use the historical context of US slavery to enrich your interpretations of them;
- ✓ Connect nineteenth-century depictions of enslavement to contemporary depictions of racial injustice.
- ✓ Develop different techniques of literary analysis and use them to move beyond superficial interpretations of a literary text;
- ✓ Develop strategies for unpacking formally difficult literary texts;
- ✓ Use other students' ideas and feedback to develop your own literary interpretations through synchronous discussions and activities;
- ✓ Craft active sentences free from common grammatical errors.

Required Texts (available at the University bookstore unless otherwise noted):

- *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave* by Frederick Douglass. Modern Library Ed., 2004.
- *Beloved* by Toni Morrison. Vintage International Edition, 2004.
- *The Hate U Give* (novel) by Angie Thomas. HarperCollins, 2017.
- *Digging into Literature: Strategies for Reading, Analysis, and Writing*. By Joanna Wolfe and Laura Wilder. Bedford/St. Martin's, 2016.

- “Désirée’s Baby” and other short course readings can be found on D2L, under the week it’s assigned.

Expectations Around Synchronous Attendance:

This course will take place online, but it will take place synchronously, during our regularly scheduled class times. Although you will be expected to do the readings and assignments outside of class, you are expected to attend all the classes synchronously and participate in the discussions and activities that will take place during them. That is, this class will function very much like an in-person class in that we will be meeting in real-time and together (although over Zoom).

<u>Course Requirements</u>	<u>Percentage of Final Grade</u>
Discussion and Activities Assignment.....	20%
Getting to Know Your Classmates Assignment	5%
Quizzes.....	10%
“Getting Below the Surface” Essay (3 pp.) incl. draft and peer workshop participation	25%
Black History Month Event and Reflection (1-2 pp.).....	10%
“Connecting the Dots” Final Essay (4 pp.) incl. an initial discussion board post	30%

There is no final exam in this course.

Grading System

You must receive a passing grade on the “Discussion and Activities Assignment” as well as complete all written work to qualify for a passing grade.

This class uses a combination of letter grades and percentages. Grade conversions follow the English department’s standard rubric:

90 + %	A+
85 – 89 %	A
80 – 84 %	A–
77 – 79 %	B+
74 – 76 %	B
70 – 73 %	B–
67 – 69 %	C+
64 – 66 %	C
60 – 63 %	C–
55 – 59 %	D+
50 – 54 %	D
0 – 49 %	F

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 for intellectual depth, insightfulness, and collegiality.

Components of the Course:

- **Discussion and Activities Assignment:** There will be two synchronous classes each week except the final week. These classes include discussions and other activities to help you develop different techniques to interpret and write about the literature we'll be reading. After the add/drop period, you will receive one point for each time that you attend class (you must attend the whole class) and participate in the discussions and activities taking place that day. To facilitate these discussions and activities, you will be expected to read the texts assigned for that day before we meet. The maximum points available are 20. Here is the grade breakdown: 19-20 points=A+; 17-18 points=A; 15-16=B; 13-14=C; 11-12=D; 10=F; 9 or fewer=no credit for the course.
- **Getting to Know Your Classmates:** Each student will be assigned a cohort group. In order to get to know some of your classmates, you'll post an introduction and respond to two other introductions from people in your group. For more details, go to "Assignments" on D2L.
- **Digging Below the Surface Essay (1000-1200 words):** This short essay will help you practice the techniques of literary analysis you've been learning, which enable you to go beyond a superficial interpretation of a literary text. Because successful academic writing requires reflection and feedback, you will write a draft of this essay and participate in a peer workshop, which requires you to write letters to two of your peers. Note that you are not able to take an extension on writing the draft and peer workshop letters. If you cannot participate in the workshop for whatever reason, you can still turn in the essay, but it will receive a full letter-grade deduction (e.g., go from a "B" to a "C"). For more details, go to "Assignments" on D2L.
- **Black History Month Activity and Reflection:** Our university will be offering a variety of events in February to honor Black History Month. As a way to understand the current moment of race relations and its connections to the past, you will choose one of these (virtual) activities to attend and turn in a reflection on it. For more details, go to "Assignments" on D2L.
- **"Connecting the Dots" Final Essay (1400-1600 words):** This course aims to leave you with an ability to connect the dots between current and past depictions of racial injustice, which this essay asks you to do. This essay also asks you to engage again in literary analysis, building on what you did in your Getting Below the Surface essay. For more details, go to "Assignments" on D2L.
- **Quizzes:** There will be four short quizzes over the course of the semester. These will help you keep up with the readings, practice different reading strategies, and demonstrate your ability to write grammatical sentences. You will know what readings the quiz covers before you take it. Although they will be open book, you will need to have completed the relevant readings in order to do well on them.

All assignments will be submitted online, via D2L. Assignments submitted via email will not be accepted unless prior arrangements have been made.

Missed Classes and Quizzes:

An occasional missed class will not seriously impact your participation grade (remember that you collect one point for every synchronous class you participate in). You are also allowed to make up one quiz that you miss, for whatever reason. However, you need to contact Dr. Halpern about making that quiz up, and you must make it up before the next class after it was given in order to allow the class to go over it in the following class.

Late Assignments:

Because these are difficult times and emergencies can easily arise, you are allowed to turn in any one assignment up to two days late with the exception of the Getting Below the Surface essay draft and workshop letters (which need to be turned in on time to enable your peers to give you feedback and allow you to participate in the workshop). However, you do need to let Dr. Halpern know you are taking the extension at least twenty-four hours before it's due. Turning in more than one assignment late will result in a 1/3 grade deduction on that assignment for every day late. You cannot split up the extension and use it for more than one assignment.

Expectations Around Turning In Your Own Work and Taking the Quizzes Independently:

You are expected to be the sole author of the writing you do for this class—no part of it should be written by someone else or taken from the web. Academic writers often *incorporate* the words of other scholars to help them make their own points; when you do this, you need to make it clear when you are including the words or ideas of other writers, including any anonymous writers from the web. We'll discuss in class how to use parenthetical references and a works cited list to do this.

You are also expected to take the quizzes on your own, without the help of your classmates or anyone else. Do not share your answers with other classmates or help them take their own quiz. This kind of collaboration defeats the purpose of the quiz: to motivate you and your classmates to keep up with the reading and see what you need to work on more.

If you feel pressured or tempted to violate any of these expectations, please let Dr. Halpern know, and we can work together to figure out a way for you to succeed in the course without having to resort to these activities.

Office hours:

Held every T, 1-2 via Zoom. Just drop in. <https://ucalgary.zoom.us/j/98830978253>.

Passcode: 379OFFICE

One tap mobile

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Conduct:

When participating in class, please keep in mind that we all bring a diversity of knowledge, lived experiences, and blind spots to the table. Engaging in lively discussion and debate is one of the most rewarding parts of the university experience; please remain collegial at all times when interacting with your fellow students and instructors, even if you find yourselves disagreeing. Racist, sexist, homo/queer/transphobic, or otherwise inflammatory remarks will not be tolerated in the classroom.

Students, employees, and academic staff are expected to demonstrate behavior in class that promotes and maintains a positive and productive learning environment. For more details, see the University of Calgary Calendar, the Code of Conduct and Non-Academic Misconduct policy and procedures, which can be found at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html>

Internet and Email Use:

Students are responsible for being aware of and following the University's Internet and email use policy, which can be found at <https://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/electronic-communications-policy.pdf>

Guidelines for Online Sessions:

To help ensure sessions are private, please do not share the zoom links or passwords with others, or on any social media platforms. Course links and passwords are intended only for students registered in the class. Zoom recordings and materials presented on Zoom/D2L, including any teaching materials, should not be shared, distributed or published without the instructor's permission.

The use of video conferencing programs relies on participants to act ethically, honestly and with integrity, and in accordance with the principles of fairness, good faith, and respect (as per the [Code of Conduct](#)). You play an important role in helping create an effective, safe and respectful learning environment while we're zooming with each other. Participants are required to use names officially associated with their UCID (legal or preferred names listed in the Student Centre) when engaging in these activities.

Instructors/moderators can remove those whose names do not appear on class rosters. Non-compliance may be investigated under relevant University of Calgary conduct policies (e.g [Student Non-Academic Misconduct Policy](#)). If participants have difficulties complying with this requirement, they should email the instructor of the class explaining why, so the instructor may consider whether to grant an exception, and on what terms. For more information on how to get the most out of your Zoom sessions visit: <https://elearn.ucalgary.ca/guidelines-for-zoom/>

Please be prepared, as best as you are able, to join class in a quiet space that will allow you to be fully present and engaged in Zoom sessions. In this class, students will be asked to keep their cameras on and unmute themselves as much as possible.

Our classes will be recorded in order to enable students who had to miss a session because of an emergency to watch them. These recordings will be used to support student learning only and will not be shared or used for any other purpose.

Technology Requirements:

In order to successfully engage in learning experiences at the University of Calgary, students taking online, remote and blended courses are required to have reliable access to the following technology:

- A computer with a supported operating system, as well as the latest security, and malware updates;
- A current and updated web browser;
- Webcam (built-in or external);
- Microphone and speaker (built-in or external), or headset with microphone;
- Current antivirus and/or firewall software enabled;
- Broadband internet connection.

Most current laptops will have a built-in webcam, speaker and microphone.

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. “Plagiarism” occurs when a Student presents the ideas, expression of ideas or work of another individual as the Student’s own. Work may include algorithms, code, composition, data, methods, design, formulae, images, indigenous oral teachings, art and ceremonies, organization of ideas, and scientific and mathematical concepts.

<https://ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-academic-misconduct-policy.pdf>

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: maboym@ucalgary.ca.

Find The English Pages research guide here:

<https://library.ucalgary.ca/sb.php?subjectid=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 <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/welcome.html>

Grade appeals:

Consult the following University Calendar link and request advice from the English Department office, SS 1152 or email adveng@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:

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/b-6-1.html>

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

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/b-6.html>

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

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/b-6-2.html>

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.

***INSTRUCTOR'S INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY**

Course materials created by instructors (including presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments and exams) remain the intellectual property of the instructor. These materials may NOT be reproduced, redistributed or copied without the explicit consent of the instructor. The posting of

course materials to third party websites such as note-sharing sites without permission is prohibited. Sharing of extracts of these course materials with other students enrolled in the course at the same time may be allowed under fair dealing.

***FREEDOM OF INFORMATION AND PROTECTION OF PRIVACY**

Student information will be collected in accordance with typical (or usual) classroom practice. Students' assignments will be accessible only by the authorized course faculty. Private information related to the individual student is treated with the utmost regard by the faculty at the University of Calgary.

***COPYRIGHT LEGISLATION**

All students are required to read the University of Calgary policy on Acceptable Use of Material Protected by Copyright (<https://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/acceptable-use-of-material-protected-by-copyright-policy.pdf>) and requirements of the copyright act (<https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-42/index.html>) to ensure they are aware of the consequences of unauthorised sharing of course materials (including instructor notes, electronic versions of textbooks etc.). Students who use material protected by copyright in violation of this policy may be disciplined under the Non-Academic Misconduct Policy <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html>.

***MEDIA RECORDING (if applicable)**

Please refer to the following statement on media recording of students: <https://elearn.ucalgary.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Media-Recording-in-Learning-Environments-OSPFINAL.pdf>

***Media recording for lesson capture**

The instructor may use media recordings to capture the delivery of a lecture. These recordings are intended to be used for lecture capture only and will not be used for any other purpose. Although the recording device will be fixed on the Instructor, in the event that incidental student participation is recorded, the instructor will ensure that any identifiable content (video or audio) is masked, or will seek consent to include the identifiable student content to making the content available on University approved platforms.

***Media recording for self-assessment of teaching practices**

The instructor may use media recordings as a tool for self-assessment of their teaching practices. Although the recording device will be fixed on the instructor, it is possible that student participation in the course may be inadvertently captured. These recordings will be used for instructor self-assessment only and will not be used for any other purpose.

***Media recording for the assessment of student learning**

The instructor may use media recordings as part of the assessment of students. This may include but is not limited to classroom discussions, presentations, clinical practice, or skills testing that occur during the course. These recordings will be used for student assessment purposes only and will not be shared or used for any other purpose.

SEXUAL VIOLENCE POLICY

The University recognizes that all members of the University Community should be able to learn, work, teach and live in an environment where they are free from harassment, discrimination, and violence. The University of Calgary's sexual violence policy guides us in how we respond to incidents of sexual violence, including supports available to those who have experienced or witnessed sexual violence, or those who are alleged to have committed sexual violence. It provides clear response procedures and timelines, defines complex concepts, and addresses incidents that occur off-campus in certain circumstances. Please see the policy available at <https://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/sexual-violence-policy.pdf>

***OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION**

Please visit the Registrar's website at: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/registration/course-outlines> for additional important information on the following:

- Wellness and Mental Health Resources
- Student Success
- Student Ombuds Office

- Student Union (SU) Information
- Graduate Students' Association (GSA) Information
- Emergency Evacuation/Assembly Points
- Safewalk

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

“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.