



UNIVERSITY OF
CALGARY

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
COURSE
WINTER 2021

English 527: Advanced topic in a selected author: **Carol Shields**

An in-depth examination of Carol Shields as writer, critic, and biographer.

Instructor	Professor Aritha van Herk, CM, AOE, FRSC
E-mail:	vanherk@ucalgary.ca
Web Page:	D2L (access via MyUofC portal)
Office Hours:	Professor van Herk will be available for e-mail or on-line consultations on Wednesdays, from 14:00 to 15:30.

Mondays and Wednesdays: 12:30 – 13:45: Synchronous Classes by ZOOM, join through D2L
You are expected to attend, and if possible, to keep your camera on.

Course description:

The writings of Carol Shields altogether comprise an astonishing achievement. In her life, she authored three collections of poetry, nine novels, three gatherings of short fiction (collated in *Collected Stories*), three works of biography and criticism, and seven works of drama, as well as editing two collections of essays by others (*Dropped Threads*). Her body of work and many awards (Arthur Ellis Award for Best Canadian Mystery, Governor General's Award for Fiction, National Book Critics Circle Award, the Pulitzer Prize, Orange Prize, and *Prix de Livre*) declare her importance. More germane to our study will be her approach to meta-textual fiction, material detail, gender, and what has been called “radical ordinariness” or “the profundity of the mundane.”

This course will study the work of this author through the lens of genre and etched narrative, with attention to that aspect of trajectory and its resonance, how domestic and family origins are key to Shields’ process and literary production. Shields articulates a metatextual oeuvre that raises questions for Canadian literature as well as for writing, particularly for what has been identified as domestic, or “women’s literature.” This class will examine that rubric but will also examine how her writing models different subversions of realism, postmodernism, mystery, and autobiography.

While no semester-long course can study in depth ALL her publications, students are encouraged to read Shields’ complete *oeuvre*. Our critical analysis will focus on five of the novels, one biography, and her collected commentaries on the practice of writing.

Key research questions for this course will include: aspects of women's writing in Canada; creative explorations into approaches to narrative; the complications of gendered reading; spatial and place-specific peregrinations; creative and critical cross-fertilization; the friction between the past and the present; writerly engagement with multiple genres; as well as the challenges of evaluating a writer's "completed" work.

Pre-requisite for this course: *6 units of English at the 400 level.*

This class requires steady ongoing work, handing in assignments during the term, in-person attendance at synchronous classes, and serious focus.

This course will take place online via Desire2Learn (D2L) and Zoom. To best succeed in the course, students are encouraged to complete their assignments using the D2L learning environment and the required synchronous Zoom sessions. When unable to participate live due to unforeseen circumstances, inform the instructor in advance and propose an alternative participation activity.

Participation is an important aspect of this course; you are graded on it.

This class will meet as a whole synchronously every Monday and Wednesday, 12:30 to 13:45.

*COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this course students will be able to:

- identify and interpret various literary strategies in the work of a 20th century writer;
- demonstrate readerly awareness of the synergy of form and content;
- analyze genre declension in Shields' work;
- critique Shields' deployment of language;
- write a clear literary exegesis on the work under scrutiny;
- apply a honed understanding of how language, image, description, and dialogue work;
- employ critical tools with which to analyze writing and to discuss key issues in the area of communication;
- understand and demonstrate appropriate social conduct and knowledge of cross-cultural differences when reading texts and discussing them in a class context.

Required Texts and readings:

Collected Stories

Startle and Illuminate: Carol Shields on Writing

Jane Austen

Larry's Party

Swann: A Mystery

The Republic of Love

The Stone Diaries

Unless

Books are available from the bookstore, physically and virtually. We will begin with short stories first.

*LEARNING TECHNOLOGIES AND REQUIREMENTS

There is a D2L site for this course which the Course Outline, the Class Schedule, and other relevant class resources and materials will be posted (see d2L.ucalgary.ca).

In order to successfully experience learning at the University of Calgary, students taking online courses are required to have reliable access to the following technology:

- A computer with a supported operating system, as well as 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.

Assignments and Evaluation:

Class Participation and Overall Participation

(based on timely submission of assignments, lecture attendance and preparation, bibliographical contributions, discussion and critical acumen in seminars): 10%

Short paper: (5 pages): 20%

Long paper: (10 pages): 30%

Final Paper, which may be a creative response (20 pages): 40%

TOTAL 100%

**NB There is NO FINAL EXAM in this class.

**NB Students must complete ALL assignments to receive a passing grade. One missing piece will result in a final grade of F.

Detailed records on attendance and in-class contributions will be used in the calculation of the participation mark. Attendance is an aspect of participation

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/e-3.html>

Students are expected to attend class regularly and to be fully present and engaged in class activities and discussions. These are part of the participation grade, as outlined in the assessment components section above. If for reasons of illness or other unusual event students miss a class session included as a component of participation, they should contact the instructor to discuss options.

There is NO final EXAM in this course. Students are graded on their reading, participation, critical acumen and writing.

Late Assignments or Absences:

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

I am thoroughly sick of the word “thing” standing in for every object, event, emotion, or idea. Use of the word “thing” in your papers will be penalized with the loss of a third of grade (for example, from an A- to a B+). Expand your vocabulary.

All assignments are due to your professor via email, submitted as a doc or docx e-mail attachment to Professor van Herk (vanherk@ucalgary.ca) by the due date on the Class Schedule with the paper identified as follows: 527, your last name, assignment #.doc. It is your responsibility to keep backup copies of all assignments in case of technical glitch or loss.

Grading System:

The University of Calgary’s official four-point Grading System, as described in the Calendar will be used in this course. <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/f-2.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)

Your final grade will consist of an evaluation of the work you write, your performance in class, your reading, and your participation. All written assignments are graded (using the letter system) and returned to you.

Your attendance and engagement are part of your participation grade. You are expected to attend class synchronously, and to apply our discussion to your assignments.

My explanation of grades

A-/A/A+: Exceptional work

B+/B/B-: Good work

C+/C/C-: Average/Satisfactory work

D range: Minimal pass

F: No Credit

Please note that, according to the University Calendar (F.1), 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

CONDUCT

Students, employees, and academic staff are expected to demonstrate behaviour in class that promotes and maintains a positive and productive learning environment.

ALL members of the University community, students, employees, and academic staff are expected to demonstrate conduct consistent with the University of Calgary Calendar, the Code of Conduct and Non-Academic Misconduct policy and procedures, which can be found at:

Academic or non-academic misconduct will NOT be tolerated. Every text that you send, every comment that you make (on ZOOM, on D2L, or in Chat) is public, not anonymous, and is part of your university record. Inappropriate comments of any nature will be followed up with corrective action. Racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic or any other prejudicial comments will be called out and dealt with appropriately.

USE OF INTERNET AND ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICES IN CLASS

Laptops and mobile devices are acceptable as tools for this synchronous class but must be used in a manner appropriate to the course and classroom activities. Please refrain from accessing websites and resources that may be distracting to you or other learners during class time. You are not to take screen shots, surf the net, text message your friends, play games, or do assignments for a different class. Cell phone notifications are to be turned off during class; please do not entertain us with dings and ring tones.

Students are responsible for being aware of the University's Internet and email use policy, which can be found at <https://ucalgary.ca/legal-services/university-policies-procedures/acceptable-use-electronic-resources-and-information-policy>

GUIDELINES FOR ZOOM SESSIONS

Zoom is a program that allows us to meet at specific times for a "live" video conference, so that we have the opportunity to work virtually and discuss relevant course material as a learning community.

To help ensure Zoom sessions are private, do not share the Zoom link or password with others, or on any social media platforms. Zoom links and passwords are intended only for students registered in this course. Zoom recordings and materials presented in Zoom, including any teaching materials, must not be shared, distributed or published without the instructor's permission.

The use of video conferencing 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 University's Code of Conduct). When entering Zoom, you play a role in helping to maintain an effective, safe and respectful learning environment. Please be mindful of how your behaviour in these sessions affects others and behave with courtesy and respect.

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/> .

If you are unable to attend a Zoom session, please contact your instructor to arrange an alternative activity for the missed session (e.g., to review a recorded session). 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. Students should ideally turn on their webcam in the class.

The instructor may record online Zoom class sessions for the purposes of supporting student learning in this class – such as making the recording available for review of the session or for students who miss a session. Students will be advised before the instructor initiates a recording of a Zoom session. These recordings will be used to support student learning only and will not be shared or used for any other purpose.

Zoom protocol

- Close ALL other programs not pertinent to the class, on your device.
- Make sure you have adequate headphones that allow you to speak and to hear the instructor.
- Attend Zoom sessions from a quiet place. Set up a Zoom background if there is activity going on behind you.
- Keep your microphone on mute unless it is your turn to speak.
- If enabled by the instructor, use the chat function to ask questions and participate during a session. You may NOT privately message classmates.
- Watch for Zoom fatigue: multiple classes in Zoom can be fatiguing given the demanding visual cues our brains try to process. The following tips can help manage Zoom fatigue:
 - Choose “Speaker View” so you can focus your attention on one speaker
 - If possible, attend Zoom classes in a quiet environment with minimal distractions
 - If possible, take breaks from screens between Zoom sessions and practice Zoom wellbeing.

It is recommended that you follow these guidelines when attending Zoom sessions, but even with the best protections, inappropriate activity may occur. If an incident that affects your learning or ability to focus or participate takes place, talk to your course instructor immediately. Should you suspect your class has been disrupted by individuals outside of the class, or a security incident has occurred, you can report incidences to IT Security. Contact the IT Support Center at 403.220.5555 or itsupport@ucalgary.ca.

How to do well in this course:

1. Class attendance is required. You will have difficulty passing if you do not attend synchronous sessions on ZOOM, if you do not read the assigned material in advance, and if you do not participate in discussion.
2. Students who work steadily throughout the term perform better than students who put off assignments. However, if you are ill or are experiencing other difficulties, do let me know so that appropriate accommodation can be made for your circumstances.
3. The assignments you submit to the instructor must be double-spaced, with at least 1-inch margins, and must use a clear font so that it can be read easily. Ensure that your name and your student number is on your paper and that the pages are numbered in sequence. All writing must be submitted to Professor van Herk's email address as a doc or docx attachment.
4. Follow the separate Class Schedule for this class. Please use it to plan and to make effective use of your time.
5. Class participation (discussion) is a requirement, part of the graded component of this course.
6. If you are having difficulties of any kind, or if you have questions, please feel free to e-mail me. I am happy to speak with you on ZOOM at a convenient time. Do not hesitate to inform me of potential difficulties because I may be able to help you solve them.

Guidelines for in-class discussion:

Students will be marked for the quality of their engagement with the class, receiving merit for the insightfulness of their observations, critical questions, and the thoughtfulness of their contributions.

From the language that holds sway in daily conversation and from our abbreviated virtual language, a nuanced vocabulary may seem archaic, but is increasingly desirable. The current reliance on "thing," "you know," and "like" are especial markers of a lazy tongue. A key objective of this class is a focus on improving your eloquence and wit by moving beyond such limited vernacular. Please note your oral fixatives and work to enhance your eloquence.

In terms of evaluative positions and their critical expression, your personal tastes are a less useful benchmark than objective appreciation. When reading any text, the questions you must confront are not whether or not you "liked" the material, but how it is developed, with reference to literary elements. Also, learning is about confronting uncomfortable ideas. Shields did not shy away from complex situations, and at some point during this class, we are likely to encounter sensitive material.

Assignments:

Short Paper (1000 words): 20%

This short discussion paper will apprehend and discuss the deployment of place or material detail in any one of Shields' works.

Long paper (2000 words): 30%

This research paper should examine in detail one of the threads traced throughout and within Shields' work.

Final Paper, which may be a creative response (4000 words): 40%

You will derive your own topic for the final paper.

Class participation (discussion and preparedness): 10%

Class participation is measured on the basis of germane contribution to discussion, and on each student's preparedness and engagement with the work, as well as ability to speak eloquently.

There is no exam in this class.

All assignments must be complete for students to pass this course.

Aritha van Herk
Professor
Department of English

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?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 <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.

***RESEARCH ETHICS (if applicable)**

If a student is interested in undertaking an assignment that will involve collecting information from members of the public, they should speak with the course instructor and consult the CFREB Ethics (<http://www.ucalgary.ca/research/researchers/ethics-compliance/cfreb>) before beginning the assignment.

***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-OSP_FINAL.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.