

FACULTY OF ARTS  
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH  
COURSE OUTLINE

ENGLISH 609.66-01

WINTER 2015

COURSE TITLE: Studies in a Literary Period: The Shelley Circle

Instructor: David Sigler

Office: SS 1014

Phone: (403) 220-6573

E-mail: dsigler@ucalgary.ca

Office hours: Tuesdays 9:30–10:30, Wednesdays 11:30–12:30, Thursdays 9:30–10:30

Homepage/course website: Desire2Learn course site

**Course description:** A study, in seminar style, of a group of British Romantic writers who lived, wrote, traveled, and loved one another in daring and often controversial ways. At the center of things will be Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley, author of *Frankenstein*, and her husband, the poet Percy Bysshe Shelley, author of *Prometheus Unbound*. We will also read work by Mary's radical parents, the philosopher-novelists William Godwin and Mary Wollstonecraft. We will read some Byron, the loveliest poet in the world, and a story by John Polidori. Questions for our consideration will include: What is a family? Can poetry save the world? Is monogamy a good idea? Is it advisable to build a huge and bloodthirsty creature out of human corpses? Are all soldiers in some sense women? Can women realistically be improved? If winter comes, can spring be far behind?

**Texts and readings:**

Lord Byron, *Byron's Poetry and Prose* (Norton) 9780393925609

William Godwin, *Caleb Williams* (Oxford) 9780199232062

Mary Shelley, *The Last Man* (Oxford) 9780199552351

Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein* (Dover) 9780486282114 (but if you already have some other edition, that's okay instead)

P.B. Shelley, *Shelley's Poetry and Prose* (Norton) 9780393977523

Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (Dover)

M. Wollstonecraft and M. Shelley, *Mary/Maria/Matilda* (Penguin) 9780140433715

**Assignments and Evaluation:**

Contributions to seminar discussion: 10%

Book review: 10% (due Friday, January 30)

Review essay: 15% (staggered due dates throughout semester)

Conference paper: 25% (due Monday, February 23)

Seminar paper: 40% (due Friday, April 17)

The **book review** should be 1250–1500 words, double-spaced. You will select a recent scholarly book in which our authors (one or more of them) figure significantly. It could be a book, say, on Wollstonecraft's legacy, or a broader book on Romantic scientific discourses that has a chapter on Mary Shelley. The book will have been published since 2010, and will be a significant book in the field (i.e., from a well-known scholarly press). Your job is first to convey accurately the argument of the book—overall and chapter-by-chapter—and then to assess its strengths and weaknesses and its contribution to the field.

**Review essays** are like extended book reviews, covering several books and articles to identify and reckon with larger trends in the field. It's a comparative analysis of several academic authors at once, as the authors carve out and analyze an emerging topic of scholarly interest. Yours should be 2000–2500 words. In it, your job is to identify a recent development or trend in scholarly studies of the Shelleys, their circle-mates, or their larger literary or social context.

You will read around in the field to find a topic that's of interest to you, perhaps related to your seminar paper topic, and write an essay evaluating the recent scholarship. Examples of possible topics might be: ecocritical studies of second-generation Romanticism, Shelley or Byron in a wider European context, approaches to early nineteenth-century travel writing, Byron's celebrity, feminist approaches to the enlightenment—etc. The review essay will take stock of three or four recent scholarly works (books, book chapters, and articles, published since about 2007 or so), putting them in conversation with each other and gleaning from them a larger trend. The essay should provide a kind of state-of-the-field report and a critical evaluation of these developments. After an overview making your argument about what's going on overall, you'll summarize and respond to each individual work, all while speaking to the state of the conversation or trends in the field. What are the major points of dispute? What are the new approaches? Do these work share certain theoretical commitments, and what's at stake here if they do (or don't)? What problems in the traditional scholarship are these works aiming to solve? What are the benefits or drawbacks of these new approaches? Which texts and authors are coming to the fore, and why? For this assignment, you'll write the review essay and turn it in, but also present your findings in a ten-minute **oral presentation** to the seminar. Your essay is due on the day you give your presentation. The presentation needn't just be a reading aloud of the paper—it can be more pedagogical, introducing us, as a seminar, to important recent developments in the field and helping us take stock of them.

The **conference paper** should be 2500 words, double-spaced. It needs to be on a different topic from your seminar paper. It's an eight pager, designed to be read aloud in 20 minutes. As with any conference paper, you will first need to write a 250-word abstract for the paper. This should be submitted to me by email a week before the paper is due.

**The seminar paper** should aspire to be a publishable professional article. It is to be on a separate topic from the conference paper. It may relate to the topic of the review essay, if you like. Think of it not as a paper for a course, but as the (very polished) draft of a scholarly article. Not everyone (especially at the M.A. level) will be able to deliver this level of work (at least right away), but that's the goal. It should be 17–22 pages in length, in proper MLA or Chicago style. It must make a contestable and original claim, pursuing that claim until the reader is convinced of its rightness and significance, and situating that insight into the conversations underway in the field. In the process, it must offer a new and compelling reading of one or more of the texts or authors we are studying together. I'm here to help you: please come to my office hours often as you develop and revise your work. We can talk over interpretive problems, discuss how you're framing the argument, and think through a reader's needs in relation to what you're arguing. You should help each other: band together in informal groups to review and respond to each other's work-in-progress.

With the seminar paper, the review essay, and the conference paper, improper citation style will penalize the assignment by 1/3 of a letter grade. Chicago or MLA style are equally acceptable.

This course is a seminar, meaning that it is driven by your ideas and contributions. At all times, everyone is expected to shape and lead the **discussion**: it's a graduate-level seminar and will proceed as such. Your preparedness for class is essential and your willingness to join and shape conversations is paramount. Showing up to class every day and keeping generally mum will earn you a D in participation. You will earn a B- in participation when you make insightful comments in many discussions but stay uninvolved in others. Earning a "B" in participation means that you have come to class prepared every day, making meaningful contributions and responding to your colleagues; usually the B involves participating heartily almost every day. An A in participation goes to those who consistently offer true insight, rigorous readings and arguments, draw their peers into thoughtful discussion in an inviting and considerate way, and fluently situate their comments within the larger conversation the class is having. The "A" participator does this in every class.

**Late work** will be penalized 1/2 of a letter grade for each day it is late. Extensions are possible only in the most extreme circumstances: the typical "an atmosphere wrapt me in its all-dissolving power" or "my life has for several years been a theatre of calamity" excuses won't be of use to you here. NB: save your work and back it up!

It is expected, in a graduate course, that you will be present for every class meeting, barring the direst of emergencies. We meet only once a week. I do not expect this to be a problem, but I will warn you that students who miss two or

more class meetings will earn a “C” or below for the course. This is because class participation is a necessary component of, and indeed the primary impulse behind, the course. You should let me know in advance if you will be missing a class meeting. If something extraordinary forces you into a second absence, please come to my office hours and talk to me about it: often, one of the best options may be to withdraw from the course. It’s especially important that you are present on the days you are to lead class discussion or make your research presentation.

There is no registrar-scheduled exam for this course. There are no opportunities for extra credit. Students do not need to complete any particular assignment to receive a passing grade for the course.

**Grading system:**

Grades are calculated according to the 4 point scale used in the *Graduate Calendar*.

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/grad/current/gs-e-1.html>

Grade	Grade Point Value	Graduate Description
A+	4.00	Outstanding
A	4.00	Excellent-superior performance showing comprehensive understanding of the subject matter
A-	3.70	Very good performance
B+	3.30	Good performance
B	3.00	Satisfactory performance
B-	2.70	Minimum pass for students in Faculty of Graduate Studies
C+	2.30	All grades below B- are indicative of failure at the graduate level and cannot be counted towards Faculty of Graduate Studies course requirements.
C	2.00	
C-	1.70	
D+	1.30	
D	1.00	
F	0.00	

Please note: A B- is considered a minimum pass for students in the Faculty of Graduate Studies.

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.

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.

**Cell phones** must be turned off during class time. Internet use not pertaining to the course is prohibited. Video and/or audio recording of lecture or discussion is prohibited.

Cases of academic misconduct, including plagiarism, will be referred to the Dean of Students as per University regulations. As per the University Calendar, Section K.1: Plagiarism involves submitting or presenting work as if it were the student’s own work when it is not. Any ideas or materials taken from another source written, electronic, or oral must be fully and formally acknowledged. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to:

- (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 is an extremely serious academic offence.

It is recognized that clause (d) does not prevent a graduate student incorporating work previously done by him or her in a thesis or dissertation.

2. **Cheating** is an extremely serious academic offence. Cheating at tests or examinations includes but is not limited to dishonest or attempted dishonest conduct such as speaking to other candidates or communicating with them under any circumstances whatsoever; bringing into the examination room any textbook, notebook, memorandum, other written material or mechanical or electronic device not authorized by the examiner; writing an examination or part of it, or consulting any person or materials outside the confines of the examination room without permission to do so, or leaving answer papers exposed to view, or persistent attempts to read other students' examination papers.

3. **Other Academic Misconduct** - Other academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to, tampering or attempts to tamper with examination scripts, class work, grades and/or class records; failure to abide by directions by an instructor regarding the individuality of work handed in; the acquisition, attempted acquisition, possession, and/or distribution of examination materials or information not authorized by the instructor; the impersonation of another student in an examination or other class assignment; the falsification or fabrication of clinical or laboratory reports; the non-authorized tape recording of lectures.

4. Any student who voluntarily and consciously aids another student in the commission of one of these offences is also guilty of academic misconduct.

## Schedule of Readings and Assignments

DATE	REQUIRED READING	REVIEW ESSAY SIGN-UP
W. Jan. 14	Intro to the course, introductions. Percy Shelley, "A Defense of Poetry," "England in 1819," "Ozymandias"	
W. Jan. 21	William Godwin, <i>Political Justice</i> presentations; Godwin, <i>Caleb Williams</i> vol. 1	
W. Jan. 28	Godwin, <i>Caleb Williams</i> , vols. 2 and 3	
F. Jan 30	Book review due via D2L	
W. Feb. 4	Mary Wollstonecraft, <i>A Vindication of the Rights of Woman</i>	
W. Feb. 11	Wollstonecraft, <i>Maria</i> ; Wollstonecraft, selected travel writings	
	READING WEEK – NO CLASSES	
W. Feb. 25	Mary Shelley, <i>Frankenstein</i>	
M. Mar. 3	Conference paper due via D2L	
W. Mar. 4	Mary Shelley, <i>Matilda</i> ; Byron, <i>Manfred</i>	
W. Mar. 11	Percy Shelley, <i>The Cenci</i> ; Byron, <i>Don Juan</i> cantos 1 and 2	
W. Mar. 18	Byron, <i>Don Juan</i> cantos 3–5, 8; John Polidori, "The Vampyre"	
W. Mar. 25	Percy Shelley, <i>Prometheus Unbound</i>	
W. April 1	Mary Shelley, <i>The Last Man</i> , to p. 256	
W. April 8	Mary Shelley, <i>The Last Man</i> , to end; Byron, "Darkness"	
W. Apr. 15	Percy Shelley, "The Triumph of Life," "Ode to the West Wind," "Lift Not The Painted Veil"	
F. Apr. 17	Seminar paper due via D2L	

### 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-2-1.html>

### 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/graduate>. 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](mailto:maboym@ucalgary.ca)

Find *The English Pages* research guide here: <http://libguides.ucalgary.ca/english>

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



**Academic regulations and schedules:**

Consult the Department of English's graduate website for courses, departmental deadlines, and other related program information at <http://english.ucalgary.ca/node/245>. Consult the Faculty of Graduate Studies Calendar for university and faculty regulations, dates, deadline, fees, and schedules, student, faculty and university rights and responsibilities. The homepage for the Faculty of Graduate Studies Calendar is <http://grad.ucalgary.ca>.

For registration (add/drop/swap), paying fees and assistance with your Student Centre, contact the Graduate Office at 403 220 5484 or visit us in Social Sciences Tower 1148 in the first instance.

For program planning and advice, contact the Graduate Program Administrator at [enggrad@ucalgary.ca](mailto:enggrad@ucalgary.ca) to make an appointment with Dr. Aruna Srivastava, Graduate Program Director.

**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 the students' responsibility to request academic accommodations. If you are a student with a documented disability who may require academic accommodations and have not registered with Student Accessibility Services, please contact them at 403-220-6019. Students who have not registered with Student Accessibility Services are not eligible for formal academic accommodations. More information about academic accommodations can be found at [www.ucalgary.ca/access](http://www.ucalgary.ca/access).

**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/>

**Contact for the Graduate Student Association:** <http://gsa.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.