

FACULTY OF ARTS  
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH  
COURSE OUTLINE

ENGLISH 609.02

WINTER 2019

COURSE TITLE: The Faerie Queene and Posthumanist Theory

Tues/9:30 – 12:15, SS 1015

Instructor: J.R. Ellis

Office: SS1042

Phone: 403-220-3928

E-mail: [jellis@ucalgary.ca](mailto:jellis@ucalgary.ca)

Office hours: Tuesday 2-3

**Course description:**

Why does allegory seem so alien to our contemporary mindset? There have been no major allegories written in English since the seventeenth century, and this may have something to do with the emergence of forms of subjectivity associated with Cartesian individualism, and the attendant rise of psychological realism in literature. We can no longer accept that we are not fully autonomous beings, and that our meaning might come from elsewhere. Recent schools of theory grouped together under the label of posthumanism, including most centrally versions of ecocriticism, have challenged the way that Cartesian thinking denies our connection to bodies, animals, plants and things. Scholars of early modern literature have enthusiastically taken up these theories to explore the transitional zones of thinking where competing notions of embodiment, animism and vitality were in play.

In this course, we will explore posthumanist theories in conjunction with Edmund Spenser's allegorical romance epic, The Faerie Queene. Spenser's epic is famous for its hybrid nature, a mix of epic, romance and allegory that make any straightforward readings of its characters, actors, objects and actants difficult. The poem teaches the reader to deploy multiple strategies to make sense of any particular episode, in the overall project of refashioning the reader. Using contemporary theory and theoretically-informed criticism we will explore the strange terrain of Faery Land, and the hybrid beings that inhabit it. We will look at such topics as Lucretian atomism, human/animal relations, talking plants, metal beings, vibrant matter, agent networks, and at the kinds of non-Cartesian thinking that allegory demands.

**Texts and readings:**

Edmund Spenser, The Faerie Queene ed. A. C. Hamilton. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Longmans)

Rosi Braidotti, The Posthuman (Cambridge: Polity, 2013)

Other readings will be on reserve, or available on course D2L site

**Assignments and Evaluation:**

Theory presentation: 20%

Literature presentation: 30%

Response: 10%

Final essay (20-25 pages): 40%

**Grading system:**

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

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/grad/current/gs-g-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.

In the case of Instructors using numerical marks in the grading of term work, the departmental conversion chart applies.

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

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 4-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.

**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>

**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: [https://library.ucalgary.ca/sb.php?subject\\_id=52619](https://library.ucalgary.ca/sb.php?subject_id=52619)

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. Suzette Mayr, 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>.

### **Student Accommodations:**

#### **ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS**

The student accommodation policy can be found at: [ucalgary.ca/access/accommodations/policy](http://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 <http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy.pdf>.

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

The full policy on Student Accommodations is available at [http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy\\_0.pdf](http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy_0.pdf)

**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>

**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](http://www.ucalgary.ca/usri)). Your responses make a difference - please participate in USRI Surveys."

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/n-1.html>.

**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/>

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/n-1.html>.

#### **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.