I. Course Description

In this course we will study English-Canadian poetry, short stories, and novels published between (roughly) 1930 and the early 1970. Many of the writers we will study exemplify a recognizably modern Canadian literature and were instrumental in establishing a literary culture that we now take for granted. Through close readings of a selection of texts by (mainly) canonical writers, we will consider issues such as the relationship between literature and nationalism, Canadian adaptations of European and American aesthetic movements, the importance of women’s writing in the development of the national literature, and the place of “ethnic” writers in relation to the Canadian literary mainstream. Our collective readings of the literature will be enhanced by seminar presentations that will focus on relevant cultural, historical and political events and issues.

II. Books

A. Required
Russell Brown, Donna Bennett, and Natalie Cooke, eds. An Anthology of Canadian Literature in English, revised and abridged edition (Oxford UP)
Howard O’Hagan. Tay John (New Canadian Library)
John Marlyn. Under the Ribs of Death (New Canadian Library)
Margaret Atwood. The Edible Woman (New Canadian Library)

B. Highly Recommended

Note: All royalties earned from the sale of The Little, Brown Compact Handbook will go to the Department of English Scholarship Fund.
III. Assignments

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<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>Seminar presentation</td>
<td>sign up by May 10, 2001</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>last day June 19, 2001</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Term paper</td>
<td>due July 5, 2001</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final examination</td>
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1. Group Seminar Presentation

This assignment will give you an opportunity to meet each other and to work together as a team. The purpose of the seminars is to present important cultural, historical and political materials that will provide a broader context through which the literature might be understood and interpreted. You should attempt to link the seminar material to the particular writers and texts we are studying in the course. The seminar should last 30 minutes. Sign up by May 10th for one of the seminar topics listed below.

Important: You are also responsible for providing each member of the class with one piece of paper that represents notes to your seminar. These notes can take any form you like, but they should be substantial enough that students could later use them as study notes.

Here are some strategies that ensure a good seminar presentation:

- Be well prepared. Hastily cobbled-together presentations are often incoherent (i.e. the parts don't work very well together). In practical terms, this means that your group should meet and work together on several occasions prior to presentation day. Exchange e-mail addresses and phone numbers early in the course.
- Be focused. Think of your presentation as an orally presented group essay: that is, you should stay on topic and make sure every part of the presentation relates to the topic.
- Too much lecturing is dull. Every teacher quickly learns that simply talking at people limits, rather than fosters, their active learning. Part of your job is to find ways to facilitate the interest and intellectual involvement of class members.
- Be creative. You may invent any number of ways to present your material. Consider using audio-visual materials, and please let me know well ahead of time if you need to borrow equipment so that I can make the necessary arrangements.
- Think about the design of your notes. Give others a way of remembering the substance of your presentation. The notes should be substantial enough that they can serve as study notes, but they do not have to record every detail of your presentation.
- Have fun! Enthusiasm is infectious.

Evaluation: Each member of the group will receive the same mark; thus, it is up to you to ensure that the work of the group is shared equally. I will evaluate your presentations according to the following criteria: the intellectual rigor of the presentation; the commitment and preparation of the group; coherence of the presentation (i.e. you must
demonstrate that you have worked together as a group and that you have thought about how you will integrate your material and share the labour—in terms of both preparation and presentation); ability to respond to comments and questions from other members of the class.

2. **Term paper**
The purpose of this assignment is for you to engage more fully with the primary texts studied in the course. There are three steps to this assignment:

1) Design an original essay topic, extrapolate a thesis from the topic, and write an essay plan in which you structure the discussion and briefly indicate the kind of textual evidence (from both primary and secondary sources) that you will use to support your argument.

2) Schedule a ten-minute appointment with me during my office hours (if possible) to take place **before June 19th**. During this interview, you will orally present to me your topic, thesis, and essay plan, and I will evaluate your oral presentation, as well as give you immediate feedback as to how you might refine or improve your essay.

3) Write the essay. The essay should be 8-10 double-spaced pages in 10-12 point font, no more than 1 inch margins. Give your paper a descriptive title that includes the title of the literary work or works analyzed. DO NOT make a separate title page. DO include a works cited page. Your essay must conform in EVERY way to MLA format. **The essay is due on July 5, 2001**

**Evaluation:** 10% of the mark for this assignment will be based on the interview with me. Thus, it is important that you come to the interview with your essay topic, thesis, and essay plan well formulated. The finished paper will be graded according to the following criteria: the intellectual challenge and persuasiveness of the argument; the integration, relevance and analysis of the evidence presented (both from the primary text/s and from secondary sources); the logic and coherence of the discussion; mechanics (organization, sentence structure, grammar, punctuation, etc.).

3. **Final examination**
The final exam will cover the work of the course as a whole and will be scheduled during the exam period. You will not be able to extensively repeat material that you have already discussed in your seminar presentations and essays. There will be some choice of questions.

IV. **Policies**

1. **Classroom work**
What you get out of this course is in direct proportion to what you put into it. I don’t give grades for participation in classroom discussion, but I do take note of those who attend regularly and contribute something to the course. Much of the responsibility for the intellectual work that goes on in this course lies with you.
2. Plagiarism and cheating
Cheating, of which plagiarism is a form, will result in AT LEAST automatic failure of the assignment and could lead to other penalties, including failure of the course or consequences even more dire. Plagiarism is the presentation (whether deliberate or not) of another person's work as your own. This includes obvious cheating, such as copying or downloading parts of or whole published essays, copying another student's paper, recycling a lecture, and purchasing or downloading from the internet an essay that someone else has written. It also includes failing to copy quotations correctly or putting them in double quotation marks, getting page references wrong or leaving them out altogether, failing to hand in a list of works cited, and other forms of sloppy documentation. Refer to the attached page for the Faculty of Arts policy on plagiarism and other academic offenses. You should also read University Policy #71 in the undergraduate calendar or on-line at http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infocal/UW/policy_71.html

3. Late essays and missed assignments
You have to be there for your group seminar presentation. The only exception would be for medical or other emergencies. In that case, contact me and the group members immediately to make alternative arrangements. You will have to provide official documentation to substantiate your incapacity and you will be required to do make up work.

I do not grant extensions except in emergency circumstances. Again, official documentation is required. Computer problems do not count as emergencies. If you decide to hand in your essay late, you'll have to pay a price: a late penalty of 3% (out of 100) per day, including weekends.

NOTE: I do not accept any essays at all after the last day of classes.

V. Schedule of Classes

May 1  Introduction I
3   Introduction II: Narrating the nation

8   E.J. Pratt “Towards the Last Spike”
10  E.J. Pratt “Towards the Last Spike”

15  F.R. Scott “The Canadian Authors Meet” “Laurentian Shield” “All the Spikes But the Last”
17  A.J.M. Smith “The Lonely Land” “The Plot Against Proteus”
Seminar: The Group of Seven and Canadian poetry

22  Howard O’Hagan Tay John
24  Howard O’Hagan Tay John
Seminar: Tourism, or, selling Canada
29 Earle Birney “Anglophone Street” “Bushed” “The Bear on the Delhi Road”
31 Class cancelled

June 5 John Marlyn Under the Ribs of Death
7 Under the Ribs of Death
Seminar: Immigration and “ethnic” writing in Canada
12 Dorothy Livesay “Green Rain” “Day and Night” “Bartok and the Geranium”
14 P.K. Page “The Stenographers” “Cry Ararat!”
Seminar: A poet’s œuvre and literary anthologies
18 Mavis Gallant “The Ice Wagon Going Down the Street”
Last day for essay interviews
21 Class cancelled

26 Margaret Laurence “To Set Our House in Order”
28 Alice Munro “Something I’ve Been Meaning to Tell You”
Seminar: Chatelaine magazine and women’s stories

July 3 Al Purdy “The Country North of Belleville” “Wilderness Gothic”
“Lament for the Dorsets”
5 Gwendolyn MacEwen “Icarus” “The Portage”
Term paper due
10 Mordecai Richler “The Summer My Grandmother Was Supposed to Die”
12 A.M. Klein “Heirloom” “Autobiographical”
Seminar: Jewish-Canadian literature
17 Leonard Cohen “You Have the Lovers” “A Kite is a Victim” “Suzanne Takes You Down”
19 Margaret Atwood The Edible Woman
Seminar: The 1960’s and Canadian urban culture
24 The Edible Woman
26 Exam preparation

VI. Seminar Topics

Note: All of these seminar topics require you to do library research. Depending on the topic, you will study microfilm, literary journals, and audio or visual materials, as well as books and scholarly journal articles. Please use library resources to the fullest extent possible and enlist the help of the librarians, who will be delighted to get you started on
your search. If you need equipment to present your seminar, please give me as much lead time as possible to make the necessary bookings through Media Services.

The notes and questions listed under each seminar topic heading are intended to facilitate the brainstorming process, but you do not have to stick to these questions; indeed, it is your responsibility to formulate your own important research questions and topics. In each case you should find ways of making connections between the particular topic being explored and the writers and literary works we are studying throughout the course.

**The Group of Seven (May 17)**
How are the aims, philosophies, and creative work of this group of artists related to the literary writing of the same period?

**Tourism, or, selling Canada (May 24)**
How was Canada (and “the west” in particular) represented to both Canadians and foreigners who were either immigrants or tourists?

**Immigration and “ethnic writing” in Canada (June 7)**
Who was immigrating to Canada in the middle part of the twentieth century and what particular problems, challenges, issues did they face? What role does literature play in making “immigrants” into “Canadians”?

**A poet’s oeuvre and literary anthologies (June 14)**
Find out as much as you can about P.K. Page and her life’s work. How representative is the selection of her work in the anthology? What conclusions can be drawn from such a case study about the process of anthologizing works of Canadian literature? How do these issues relate to canon-formation?

**Chatelaine magazine and women’s stories (June 28)**
Choose one representative issue of *Chatelaine* (Canada’s oldest “women’s magazine”) from any year during the 1950s and analyze it in terms of both content and ideology. Are women’s magazines necessarily full of stereotypes we now dismiss? How do these magazines compare with some of the women’s writing we have been reading?

**Jewish-Canadian literature (July 12)**
Sketch a mini-history of Jewish-Canadian identity. What can you say about the place of writers of Jewish background to the development of 20th-century English-Canadian literature?

**The 1960s and Canadian urban culture (July 19)**
Writers such as Leonard Cohen and Margaret Atwood lived in and (partly) wrote about their experience of big cities, as well as the social and political issues that shaped the 1960’s and early 1970s when they were beginning their careers as writers. Tell us about those days.