University of Waterloo  
Department of English Language & Literature  

English 315: Modern Canadian Literature  
Fall 2010  

Instructor: Professor Linda Warley  
Class time and location: M, W 1:00 – 2:20, DWE 1502  
Contact: Hagey Hall 270, ext. 35379, email: lwarley@uwaterloo.ca  
Office hours: M, W 2:30 – 3:30 or by appointment  

Note: this course is managed through UW-ACE.  

Course description:  
This course is about Canadian “modernism” as both a literary historical period (roughly 1920 – 1970) and a set of cultural, political, and material practices. Topics to be considered include: the relationship between literature and nationalism; Canadian uses of English (or other) literary genres and forms; gender, social class, age, and ethnicity as identity discourses; the relationship between aesthetics and politics; the material histories of writing and publishing. Our methodology will mainly consist of conducting close readings of selected literary works by some of the major authors of the period, but we will also contextualize writers and their works in relation to developments in Canadian history and culture.  

Course objectives:  
- To acquire a sense of the literary history of Canada between ~ 1920s-1970’s,  
- To interrogate the term “modernism”  
- To undertake detailed critical analyses of selected works of Canadian literature in various genres  
- To develop independent research skills using both print and web resources  
- To hone presentation skills in both written and oral forms  

Book list, required:  

Recommended general reference sources:  
Carl Klinck, ed. Literary History of Canada: Canadian Literature in English (4 vols)  
W.H. New, ed. Encyclopedia of Literature in Canada  
Eva-Marie Kröller, ed. The Cambridge Companion to Canadian Literature  
Any glossary of literary terms  
Any good writing handbook; the bookstore has copies of the Compact Little, Brown Handbook
The Purdue University Online Writing Lab (OWL) also offers a wealth of writing advice, including instruction on using MLA citation style. http://owl.english.purdue.edu/

**Schedule of classes:**

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<th>Readings, topics, activities</th>
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<td>Welcome and introduction to the course</td>
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<td>Sept 15</td>
<td>Lecture: Nation and narration</td>
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<td>Sept 20</td>
<td>Frederick Philip Grove “Snow” (1922) and “Snow” (1932)</td>
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<td>Sept 22</td>
<td>E.J. Pratt “Towards the Last Spike”</td>
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<td>Sept 27</td>
<td>“Towards the Last Spike” contd.</td>
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<td>Sept 29</td>
<td>F.R. Scott “The Canadian Authors Meet” “Lakeshore” “All the Spikes But the Last”</td>
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<td>A.M. Klein “Heirloom” “Portrait of the Poet as Landscape” SEMINAR: LITTLE MAGAZINES</td>
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<td>Dorothy Livesay “Green Rain” “The Difference” “Day and Night”</td>
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<td>Ethel Wilson Swamp Angel SEMINAR: WOMEN’S MAGAZINES</td>
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<td>Oct 25</td>
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<td>Nov 1</td>
<td>Anne Wilkinson “Easter Sketches, Montreal” “In June and Gentle Oven” “Nature Be Dammed”</td>
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<td>Nov 3</td>
<td>P.K. Page “Photos of a Salt Mine” “Cry Ararat!” SEMINAR: SMALL PRESSES</td>
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<td>Nov 8</td>
<td>Mavis Gallant “Varieties of Exile”</td>
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<td>Nov 10</td>
<td>TERM ESSAYS DUE ~ BUT NO CLASS</td>
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<td>Nov 15</td>
<td>Al Purdy “The Country North of Belleville” “At the Quinte Hotel” “Lament for the Dorsets”</td>
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<td>Nov 17</td>
<td>Margaret Laurence “To Set Our House in Order” SEMINAR: THE COFFEE HOUSE SCENE</td>
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<td>Nov 22</td>
<td>Gwendolyn MacEwen “The Portage” “Icarus”</td>
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<td>Nov 24</td>
<td>Leonard Cohen “You Have the Lovers” “Suzanne” SEMINAR: WHERE ARE THE INDIANS?</td>
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<td>Nov 29</td>
<td>George Ryga The Ecstasy of Rita Joe</td>
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<td>Dec 1</td>
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Assignments:
Group seminar 30%
Essay interview 10%
Term essay 30%
Final exam 30%

1. Group seminar
This assignment will give you an opportunity to meet each other and to work together as a team. You will choose one of the topics below and work outside of class on your research and on seminar design. The purpose of the seminar is to present to the class important critical, cultural, and historical materials that will provide a broader context through which the literature we are studying can be understood. Your seminar must be analytical (i.e. not just present facts) and it should connect in meaningful ways with the topics, writers and texts we are studying in the course. The seminar should last 30-40 minutes.

Handout: 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 for the final exam. They must also include all works cited in correct MLA format.

Equipment available: There is no need to make an audiovisual presentation (e.g. PowerPoint) unless you want to. Please know that the classroom is supplied with a PC, data projector, DVD and VCR players, overhead projector, and screen. If you want to bring your own laptop, be sure that you have the correct connector for the data projector and that you have your presentation backed up on a memory stick, as well as emailed to yourself. NB: If you would like to show any part of a film it is imperative that you check with me first to make sure that it clears copyright restrictions.

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 rigour of the presentation; the commitment and preparation of the group; the 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); your ability to generate and respond to comments and questions from other members of the class.

Advice: On UW-ACE you will find a downloadable document that gives you practical advice on how to prepare good seminar presentations.
Seminar topics:

Massey Commission Report
The Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences 1949-1951 (popularly known as the Massey Commission because of its chairman, Vincent Massey) was the first comprehensive government study of culture in Canada. For this seminar, summarize its findings, focusing on sections dealing with literature, drama, and (at your discretion) cognate cultural activities. Also analyze the rhetoric of the report, noting assumptions, values, beliefs, biases, etc. The report can be accessed here: http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/massey/index-e.html

Little magazines
Small literary magazines such as Contemporary Verse, Prism, Tamarack Review, and also local magazines such as the Kitchener-based Weed or the London-based Alphabet – among many, many others – were founded during the period covered by the course. What were their philosophies? What kind of work were they publishing and by whom? What is their larger function (or functions) in Canadian culture?

Women’s magazines
Chatelaine is “Canada’s first women’s magazine.” Choose one issue from the 1940’s or the 1950’s and conduct a thorough analysis of it. What was Chatelaine saying to its readers of the day? How were particular topics represented? (i.e. analyze modes of representation and their meanings; do not just describe content).

Women and Modernism
Recently critics writing about this period have been arguing that women had an important role to play in establishing modern Canadian literary culture. How do the women authors on the course syllabus fit into that argument? Is there a recognizably female or feminist Canadian modernism? If so, what does it look like?

Small presses
Like the small literary magazines, small publishing companies such as Talonbooks and Coach House Press supported Canadian writing during this period. Choose one press and research its history, its mandate, its philosophy, its editors, its authors, etc.

The coffee house scene
Coffee houses such as the Bohemian Embassy in Toronto were an important venue for Canadian writers, artists, and musicians from the 1960s to the 1970s. Research that history and tell us some stories. What—if any—are some contemporary equivalents?

Where are the Indians?
George Ryga is not a Native playwright, but his play The Ecstasy of Rita Joe brought to light in this period issues that were (and still are) relevant to indigenous people in Canada (in fact to all Canadians). Tell us something about the lives, experiences, and concerns Native people in Canada during this period (you may choose to limit your sense of
‘period’), paying particular attention to politics and writing. For example, this was the time of the 1969 White Paper. It was also the time of the Red Power movement.

2. Term essay
The purpose of this assignment is for you to study in depth a limited number of the primary texts studied in the course by writing about those texts in relation to a topic of your choice. You must choose texts that are on the course syllabus or obtain prior permission from me. The best essays will also be researched, so spend some time reading literary critical sources about your topic, and incorporate well-chosen sources into your essay. You do not have to be exhaustive, but a minimum of THREE relevant scholarly articles or books will enhance and contextualize your analysis. All sources (primary and secondary) must be fully acknowledged, whether you have paraphrased or quoted someone else’s ideas and words, and every source must be properly cited on a “Works Cited” page at the end of the essay. Failure to do so will result in penalty, the severity of which depends on the gravity of the infraction. Avoiding plagiarism is your responsibility. Please note that the University of Waterloo has a site license for Turnitin.com, a plagiarism detection web service.

Note: Make sure that you research articles published in scholarly journals as well as book and Internet sources. The most useful electronic databases that index articles on Canadian literary topics are the Canadian Periodical Index, the MLA International Bibliography, and Web of Science. Access them through the “Research databases” section of the University of Waterloo library web site. You could also try Google Scholar and Google Books, though these often turn up sources that are either tangential or not peer-reviewed.

There are three parts to the term essay assignment:

1) **Topic, thesis and essay plan:** Design an original essay topic, extrapolate a thesis from the topic, and compose 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) **Interview:** Schedule a ten-minute appointment with me during my office hours (if possible) to take place between Oct 4th – 27th. During the 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. It is not necessary to hand anything in for this interview: I will take notes as we talk.

3) **Writing:** Based on your essay plan and our interview, write an analytical essay of 10 pages—double-spaced, in 10-12 point font, and with no more than 1 inch margins. Give your paper a descriptive title that includes the title or titles 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 NOVEMBER 10th. Upload a digital copy to the drop box on UW-ACE. Hand in a paper copy either to**
the English department drop box or to me in class or during my office hours.

Advice: On UW-ACE you will find a downloadable document that gives you practical advice on how to write good essays.

3. Final examination
The final exam will cover the work of the course as a whole and will take place during the examination period. You will be required to write your answers in essay form.

Course Policies

Classroom work
Attendance is required, and you are expected to arrive in class well prepared, having read and thought carefully about the material to be discussed that day. Most of the classes will be a combination of lecture, seminar presentation, and open discussion. Much of the success of the course depends on your full participation in it.

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 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.

All essays must be handed in on the due date. I do not grant extensions except in emergency circumstances (computer problems do not count as emergencies). Again, official documentation will be required. If you decide to hand in your essay after the due date, the late penalty is 3% per day, including weekends.

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

University Policies

Academic Integrity: In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo community are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. For more information please see http://uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/Academic_Integrity/index.html

Please read this very clear and helpful document: “Avoiding Academic Offences: http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/arts/ugrad/academic_responsibility.html

Discipline: A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offenses, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offense, or who needs help in learning
how to avoid offenses (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under Policy 71 – Student Discipline. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71 – Student Discipline, http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm

**Grievance:** A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4, http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy70.htm

**Appeals:** A student may appeal the finding and/or penalty in a decision made under Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances (other than regarding a petition) or Policy 71 - Student Discipline if a ground for an appeal can be established. Read Policy 72 - Student Appeals, http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy72.htm

**Note for students with disabilities**
The Office for Persons with Disabilities (OPD), located in Needles Hall Room 1132, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with OPD at the beginning of each academic term. For more information, see http://www.studentservices.uwaterloo.ca/disabilities/