English 315: Modern Canadian Literature
Winter 2009

Your instructor: Professor Linda Warley
Our class time and location: Mondays and Wednesdays 1:00 – 2:20 AL 208
My contact details: Hagey Hall 270, ext. 35379, email: lwarley@uwaterloo.ca
My office hours: Mondays and Wednesdays 2:30 – 3:30 or by appointment

Course description:
This course is about “Modernism” as both a literary historical period (roughly 1920 – 1970) and a set of thematic and aesthetic concerns. Topics to be considered include: the relationship between literature and nationalism; Canadian uses of English literary genres and forms; gender and ethnicity as identity discourses; the relationship between aesthetics and politics. Our methodology will be close reading of selected literary works in several genres. But we will always contextualize the literature in relation to developments in Canadian history and culture in the middle part of the twentieth century.

Book list, required:
Donna Bennett and Russell Brown, eds. A New Anthology of Canadian Literature in English
Howard O’Hagan. Tay John
Ethel Wilson. Swamp Angel

I also recommend that you obtain copies of these reference works, especially if you plan to go on to advanced English study.

M.H. Abrams. A Glossary of Literary Terms
Any good writing handbook; the bookstore has copies of The Little Brown Compact Handbook

Schedule of classes:

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Readings, topics, activities</th>
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<tr>
<td>Jan 5</td>
<td>Welcome and introduction to the course</td>
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<td>Jan 7</td>
<td>Lecture: Nation and narration</td>
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<td>Jan 12</td>
<td>Frederick Philip Grove “Snow”</td>
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<td>Jan 14</td>
<td>E.J. Pratt “Towards the Last Spike”</td>
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<td></td>
<td>LAST DAY TO SIGN UP FOR SEMINARS</td>
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<td>Jan 19</td>
<td>Pratt, contd.</td>
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<td>Jan 21</td>
<td>F.R. Scott “The Canadian Authors Meet” “Trans Canada”</td>
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</table>
Advice: On UW-ACE you will find a downloadable document that gives you practical advice on how to prepare good seminar presentations.

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 and aids: The classroom is supplied with a computer, data projector, DVD and VCR players, blackboard, overhead projector, and screen. 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.

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 critical articles or books will enhance and contextualize your analysis. All sources (primary and secondary) must be fully acknowledged and cited in correct MLA format.

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.

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

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 February 2nd – 25th. 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 March 11th in class. Hand in a hard copy of your paper and ALSO upload a digital copy of it to the drop box on UW-ACE.**

**Evaluation**: The essay will be marked out of 100% with a marking scheme as follows: 30% for formulation and articulation of topic and thesis; 40% for structure, argumentation, and interpretation of primary and secondary sources; 30% for presentation, writing accuracy and MLA documentation.

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.

**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.

**On academic dishonesty:**
It is a serious offense to appropriate intellectual labour. Plagiarism consists of using the words or ideas of another without proper attribution. I expect that the work you submit in this course will be the product of your own labour, and that your research sources will be scrupulously documented. If you have any concerns or questions about appropriate
practice, you are sincerely encouraged to come discuss this with me—I would really like to help.

UW 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.

**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](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](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](http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy72.htm)

**Avoiding Academic Offences:** [http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/arts/ugrad/academic_responsibility.html](http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/arts/ugrad/academic_responsibility.html)

**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.

**Seminar topics:**

**Land and landscape**
While Canadian writers in this period were often preoccupied with the human relationship to the land, other artists—visual artists, filmmakers, musicians, etc.—were also interested in the human/place/nature nexus in Canadian culture. How do artists in diverse media (including literature, of course) represent ideas about Canadian landscapes during this period? (You may narrow the time frame covered as you please.) What specific ideological functions do such representations serve?

**Little magazines**
Small literary magazines such as the McGill Fortnightly Review, Northern Review, Prism, and Canadian Literature 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 1950s and conduct a thorough analysis of it. What was Chatelaine saying to its readers? How were particular topics represented? (i.e. analyze modes of representation and their meanings; do not just describe content).

**Social class**
How are issues of social class represented by authors in this period? What does social class mean in Canadian society in the middle part of the 20th century? What function does literature play in creating “class consciousness”?

**Immigration**
Canada saw an influx of immigrants during this period. Characterize that part of Canadian history. How do particular authors on the syllabus engage with ideas of “the ethnic other”?

**Becoming an icon**
Choose one author on the syllabus and research the popular and critical reception of his or her work. Why did you choose that particular author? To what extent is your author a cultural icon? How does a Canadian author become iconic?