

COURSE SYLLABUS



COURSE TITLE: ENGL-164: Indigenous Literatures

CLASS SECTION: 002

TERM: Fall 2024

COURSE CREDITS: 3

DELIVERY METHOD(S): in-person | T/Th 4:00-5:20pm in Wilna Thomas 200

Camosun College respectfully acknowledges that our campuses are situated on the territories of the Lək'wəŋən (Songhees and Kosapsum) and WSÁNEĆ peoples. We honour their knowledge and welcome to all students who seek education here.

INSTRUCTOR DETAILS

NAME: Dr. Janice Niemann (you can call me Janice, and I use she/her pronouns)

EMAIL: niemannj@camosun.ca

OFFICE: Paul 320

HOURS: Mondays from 12:00-1:00pm and Thursdays from 12:00-2:00pm in Paul 320, and Wednesdays from 3:30-4:30pm on Zoom (link is on D2L), or by appointment (this time is set aside for you to drop in and ask questions; talk about assignments, readings, or course content; or just chat about your thoughts in general)

As your course instructor, I do my best to provide an inclusive learning environment. However, if you experience barriers to learning in this course, I encourage discuss them with me. Camosun College is committed to identifying and removing institutional and social barriers that prevent access and impede success.

Hello! Welcome to ENGL-164: Indigenous Literatures, which introduces you to stories and texts by Indigenous authors from Turtle Island (North America). My name is Janice, and I will be your intrepid guide as we learn about Indigenous literatures together. I have always loved stories, and I have a PhD in English literature, so I am very excited to be here, and I hope that you are too! I'm a white settler scholar who grew up in Colwood on Songhees and Xwsepsum lands, and my ancestors are from Germany and England. I am not an expert in Indigenous literatures, but I have spent and continue to spend a lot of time reading, listening to, and researching Indigenous literatures and knowledge frameworks. Many of you will come into this class with knowledges and experiences beyond my own, especially if you have lived experience as an Indigenous person, and that is invaluable. My role in our course is not to lecture to you about your own histories, cultures, or experiences – instead, I hope to facilitate discussions about the texts that we're reading so that we can all learn together. I am confident that, like all teachers, I will make mistakes (and you might too, and that's okay!), and I hope that we'll be able to build the type of community in our class where we can hold each other accountable with compassion and work to mitigate harm.

The goal of ENGL-164 is to support you as you practice the skills that you need to analyze, interpret, and thinking critically about literature, as well as the skills that you need to research and write about literature. Writing, research, and critical-thinking skills like these ones are vital to academic success and to responsible citizenship more broadly. We'll be studying and learning from stories that range from traditional oral stories to

queer poetry to a local play to TV and movies. Our assignments are based on the [Circle of Courage](#) philosophy: our first two short assignments (positionality paper and retelling assignment) will help establish a sense of **belonging** with each other and with the stories that we're studying. The methods project will help you develop **mastery** in analysis and interpretation, and then your unessay will give you the **independence** to demonstrate your knowledge and research skills in a format that excites you (you can be as creative as you'd like, or you can write a more traditional research paper). Lastly, we'll have a final showcase for your unessay projects so that you can cultivate **generosity** by sharing your brilliant work with your peers. You'll also get a mark for engaging in course materials in class, out of class, and on D2L (your engagement points), and you have a final exam during the exam period because it's a college requirement for this course (your exam will ask you to write a comparative essay about course texts).

CALENDAR DESCRIPTION

This course examines both the oral and literary traditions of Aboriginal people. Students begin to study and analyze Indigenous literature from North America. They read and discuss a novel, short stories, poems, and plays by Aboriginal writers and write about these works in journals, essays and tests.

PREREQUISITE(S):

One of:

B in English 12

C+ in Camosun Alternative

C in ENGL 151

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES / OBJECTIVES

Upon successful completion of this course a student will be able to:

In reading literature, students will be encouraged to make connections, consider meaning, make and support inferences, and evaluate.

- Analyze Indigenous literature from both the oral and written traditions.
- Analyze Indigenous pre-contact literature in the genres of song, prayer, and storytelling by addressing their roles within Indigenous communities.
- Analyze Indigenous literature in the post-contact period through the genres of poetry, fiction, non-fiction and drama.
- Identify Indigenous literary forms, elements, and techniques.

In discussing literature, students will be given the opportunity to develop and communicate responses and interpretations using varied methods and resources.

- Identify the continuing inter-relationship of Indigenous pre-contact literatures with the written tradition.
- Examine Eurocentric notions of literal and figurative meaning in relation to Indigenous literature.
- Use literary terms such as metaphor, irony, character, setting, and plot.
- Describe the significance of differing literary interpretations from Native and non-Native perspectives.
- Use vocabulary associated with analyzing fiction, poetry, drama, and non-fiction.
- Analyze themes common to Indigenous literature.

- Describe various literary theories that are relevant to the study of Indigenous literature (e.g. post-colonial theory, feminist theory, reader response theory, etc.).

In writing about literature, students will be able to explain, support, and illustrate points in essays.

- Use a critical approach with appropriate language and terminology.
- Clarify, articulate and support a position, while remaining open to, and acknowledging, other possible interpretations.
- Evaluate specific literary techniques.
- Employ close reading skills.
- Use a scholarly essay form, including a thesis; topic sentences; argument and/or analysis; use of quotations; unified, coherent paragraphs and transitions; rhetorical strategies appropriate for purpose and audience; and effective introductions and conclusions.
- Produce writing under exam or exam-like conditions.
- Write clear, concise, effective prose, and know how to identify as well as correct common mechanical and grammatical errors.

In using information literacy skills, students will be able to:

- Determine the nature and extent of the information needed.
- Know what information resources are available, in different formats.
- Use print and electronic resources effectively and efficiently.
- Incorporate and integrate research through correct use of summary, paraphrase and quotation.
- Document sources fully and ethically, according to specified bibliographic conventions.
- Demonstrate how to resource Indigenous knowledge.

REQUIRED MATERIALS & RECOMMENDED PREPARATION / INFORMATION

You'll need two books for this course, both of which are available at the bookstore:

- Porter, Michelle. *A Grandmother Begins the Story*. Penguin, 2023.
- Scofield, Gregory. *Witness, I Am*. Nightwood Editions, 2016.

Additionally, we will be watching one TV series, *Reservation Dogs*, and one movie, *Prey*, both of which are available to stream on either **Crave** or **Disney+** (you can also watch *Reservation Dogs* for free on **CBC Gem**).

You will also need to go and see the play **1939** at the Belfry Theatre in late October or November. They offer pay-what-you-can tickets, and the link for tickets will be on D2L.

All of our other texts are available for free online; I've posted links or PDFs on D2L.

Each week, we will meet in class to discuss the assigned readings for the day. **You should be checking our D2L site regularly to make sure that you are caught up and on track, especially because some weeks there will be additional critical readings and online activities beyond the primary things listed on the syllabus.**

COURSE SCHEDULE, TOPICS, AND ASSOCIATED PREPARATION / ACTIVITY / EVALUATION

The following schedule and course components are subject to change with reasonable advance notice, as

deemed appropriate by the instructor. **All assignments should be submitted in the dropbox on D2L by 11:59pm on the day that they're due** unless another time is listed (due dates below and posted on D2L).

WEEK & DATE RANGE	TOPIC & ASSIGNED READING	DUE DATES
BELONGING / SHORT STORIES		
1 Sept 3 & 5	Introductions If you get a chance, look over the syllabus and our D2L page before class	
	Oral traditions & creation stories Thomas King, "The Truth About Stories" (54 min, link on D2L)	
2 Sept 10 & 12	Oral stories Ghandl, "In His Father's Village, Someone was Just About to Go Out Hunting Birds" (on D2L) Ghandl, "He Who Hunted Birds in His Father's Village" (on D2L) I've set aside a few minutes at the end of class today for you to find a partner for your retelling assignment	In-class paper on Thurs, Sept 12
	Positionality paper In-class paper	
3 Sept 17 & 19	Why stories matter William Sanders, "Undiscovered" (24 pages, on D2L)	
	Why stories matter Sean A. Tinsley and Rachel A. Qitsualik, "The Qallupilug Forgiven" (9 pages, on D2L) Jessica Jones, "Bad Cree" (7 pages, on D2L) We'll be spending the first part of class today doing story exchanges for your retelling assignment	
4 Sept 24 & 26	Wonderworks Daniel Heath Justice, "Indigenous Wonderworks and the Settler-Colonial Imaginary" (11 min read, link on D2L) Rebecca Roanhorse, "Welcome to Your Authentic Indian Experience™" (24 min read, link on D2L)	Retelling reflection due on Fri, Sept 27
	Wonderworks Richard Van Camp, "Aliens" (14 pages, on D2L) Justice, "Tatterborn" (10 pages, on D2L)	
MASTERY / NOVEL		

WEEK & DATE RANGE	TOPIC & ASSIGNED READING	DUE DATES
5 Oct 1 & 3	TV book club <i>Reservation Dogs, season 1</i> (8 episodes x 30 min each) CONTENT NOTE: episode 7, "California Dreamin'," focuses on suicide – please feel free skip this episode if you need to	
	Intro to novel & research methods Leanne Simpson, "Land as Pedagogy" (on D2L) We'll talk about library & research skills as well as the politics of citation and citational practice	
6 Oct 8 & 10	Novel Michelle Porter, <i>A Grandmother Begins the Story</i> , pp. 1-100	
	Novel Porter, <i>A Grandmother Begins the Story</i> , pp. 101-200	
7 Oct 15 & 17	Novel Porter, <i>A Grandmother Begins the Story</i> , pp. 201-322	
	Novel If you didn't manage to finish the novel for last class, finish it for today	
INDEPENDENCE / POETRY		
8 Oct 22 & 24	Returning to creation stories Gregory Scofield, "Muskrat Woman" (21 pages, in <i>Witness, I Am</i>)	Methods project due Fri, Oct 25
	MMIWG2S Joshua Whitehead, "mihkokwaniy" (6 pages, on D2L) Scofield, other selections from <i>Witness, I Am</i> (specific poems posted on D2L)	
9 Oct 29 & 31	Spooky Halloween special, part 1 <i>Prey</i> (1h 40min) – we'll watch the first half of <i>Prey</i> in class (feel free to bring snacks!) and then discuss it, but I recommend that you watch the entire film before class today for the best narrative experience	
	Spooky Halloween special, part 2 <i>Prey</i> (1h 40min) – we'll watch the second half of <i>Prey</i> and then discuss it	
10 Nov 5 & 7	TV book club <i>Reservations Dogs, season 2</i> (10 episodes x 30 min each)	

WEEK & DATE RANGE	TOPIC & ASSIGNED READING	DUE DATES
	<p>Colonial aftermaths Lee Maracle, Tania Carter, and Columpa Bobb, "After the Sorry Clears Who Will Pay for the Headstones" (12 pages, on D2L) Bobb, "The Last Bastion" (2 pages, on D2L) Louise Halfe, "My Ledders" (2 pages, on D2L)</p>	
<p>11 Nov 12 & 14</p>	<p>Erotic poetry Tenille K. Campbell, "#2001" (1 page, on D2L) Scofield, "He Is" (2 pages, on D2L) Bobb, "When the Sun Refuses to Give the Sky to Rain" (1 page, on D2L)</p>	
	<p>Erotics & poetry Whitehead, "id say 'ill be back' but i never intend to leave" (4 pages, on D2L) Billy-Ray Belcourt, "Gay: 8 Scenes" (10 pages, on D2L)</p>	
GENEROSITY / DRAMA		
<p>12 Nov 19 & 21</p>	<p>1939 Make sure that you've seen the play before class today (link to tickets is on D2L)</p>	
	<p>1939 & musical interlude Tanya Tagaq, <i>Animism</i> (49 min, link to Spotify on D2L) We'll continue our discussion of <i>1939</i> today, and talk about <i>Animism</i> and performance</p>	
<p>13 Nov 26 & 28</p>	<p>Unessay showcase and presentations Those of you who signed up to present today will present, and the rest of you will have the chance to see your peers' amazing projects and write your peer feedback</p>	<p>Unessay due before your presentation</p>
	<p>Unessay showcase and presentations Those of you who signed up to present today will present, and the rest of you will have the chance to see your peers' amazing projects and write your peer feedback</p>	
<p>14 Dec 3 & 5</p>	<p>TV book club <i>Reservation Dogs</i>, season 3 (10 episodes x 30 min each) CONTENT NOTE: episode 3, "Deer Lady," includes depictions of child abuse in residential schools – please feel free to skip this episode if you need to</p>	<p>Presentation reflection & peer feedback due Mon, Dec 2</p>

WEEK & DATE RANGE	TOPIC & ASSIGNED READING	DUE DATES
	Wrap up & exam review No readings – we'll be reviewing for your final exam, going over the exam format, and discussing study strategies	
Exam period Dec 9-17	Final exam date TBA (the exam schedule is usually posted mid-October)	

Students registered with the Centre for Accessible Learning (CAL) who complete quizzes, tests, and exams with academic accommodations have booking procedures and deadlines with CAL where advanced notice is required. Deadlines can be reviewed on the [CAL exams page](https://camosun.ca/services/academic-supports/accessible-learning/academic-accommodations-exams). <https://camosun.ca/services/academic-supports/accessible-learning/academic-accommodations-exams>

EVALUATION OF LEARNING

DESCRIPTION	WEIGHTING
In-class positionality paper	5%
Retelling and reflection assignment	10%
Methods project	25%
Unessay (25%) & presentation, reflection, and peer feedback (5%)	30%
Final exam (during exam period)	20%
Engagement points	10%
	TOTAL
	100%

If you have a concern about a grade you have received for an evaluation, please come and see me as soon as possible. Refer to the [Grade Review and Appeals](#) policy for more information.

<https://camosun.ca/sites/default/files/2021-05/e-1.14.pdf>

COURSE GUIDELINES & EXPECTATIONS

In order to help you get the most out of this course, I will begin each class with the assumption that you have completed any assigned readings for the day. Doing all of your readings before class is one of the best ways to set yourself up for success in an English course.

Late assignments

I will take 2% off of your assignment grade for every day that it's late past the original due date. Please know, though, that **I will always grant you an extension if you ask for one by 4:30pm on the original due date**, and I have a 48-hour grace period for each assignment in case something unexpected comes up in your life. Unless

there are extenuating circumstances, I will not grant extensions after 4:30pm on an assignment's due date—if you need more time and forget to ask, you have the 48-hour grace period to submit. To ask for an extension, you should email me before 4:30pm on the original due date, and let me know 1) your name, 2) that you'd like an extension, and 3) when you're planning to submit your assignment. You do not need to send me documentation or details, but you do need to send me those three pieces of information in order to receive an extension. I understand that sometimes life gets in the way of school, and I trust you to manage your time in the way that works best for you. You should understand, though, that the assignment schedule is set up to build the skills you will need to do well on your final paper and final exam, which, together, make up more than half of your grade for the course. If you hand in your assignments on time, I will give you detailed comments and your grade before your next assignment is due; if you hand in assignments after the original due date, even with an extension, I will not give you detailed written comments, and it may not be promptly returned to you.

Distraction policy

This policy is simple: do not distract other learners in the room. There are many reasons that you might want or need to have technology (laptop, phone, tablet) out in class, which is why my policy on technology use in the classroom is relaxed. All I ask is that you do not disrupt other students with your devices, which means that I expect you to keep the volume off on all of your devices and to use your devices for only course-related activities. Please be considerate of your peers—your screens can distract others. I will not tolerate behaviour that negatively impacts other students' learning.

Attendance and participation

I expect you to attend and participate in class because class discussion prompts a level of engagement with course material that you will not get anywhere else, and attendance is important for building a community of practice. Your attendance and participation also allow me to assess which aspects of the course you understand well, and which topics I need to review further. Although I do not give a mark for attendance, you'll have the chance to earn engagement points most classes (and that makes up 10% of your final grade), so you'll need to be in class if you want those marks.

Children and babies

It is absolutely okay to bring your child to class occasionally, in order to cover gaps in childcare. If you do bring your child to class, please step outside they're feeling chatty. Babies who are nursing are always welcome—you should never have to choose between feeding your child and coming to class.

Academic integrity

The work you submit for ENGL-164 must be your own, and should follow proper MLA formatting and citational guidelines. Presenting the work of others, whether it is used without attribution (not properly citing your sources), submitted by you but written by someone else (including work written by artificial intelligence), or produced with inappropriate help (unauthorized editing, including editing by artificial intelligence), violates the department's and the college's policies on academic integrity. It is important to acknowledge your sources for a number of reasons: you are acknowledging, respecting, and giving credit to the person who came up with the idea; you are demonstrating that you are participating in a broad scholarly conversation about your topic; and you are helping me find the really cool and interesting sources that you use in your research in case I want to learn more about your project. If an academic misconduct case does arise, I will deal with it on an individual basis, but it could result in a mark of 0% on the assignment or a failing grade in the course. Please also see the college's full statement on academic integrity (link later in syllabus), which both you and I are obliged to follow.

Grading

I will grade your assignments based on how successfully they demonstrate the learning goals for each assignment, using the specific marking rubric attached to each assignment and Camosun's guidelines for undergraduate grading (see link later in syllabus). If your assignments are submitted by the original due date, I will return them to you before your next assignments are due. Please know that your grades are never a reflection of you as a person, but merely indicate how well one particular assignment meets the assignment criteria. **You will receive an I grade (incomplete) or an F grade (fail) in the course if you do not submit the following: positionality paper, methods project, unessay, and final exam.** If you feel that an assignment you submitted has been unfairly evaluated, your first step is to discuss your concerns with me. Be prepared to show me a one-page written statement explaining how your work matches the standards for the letter grade you think you should have received with reference to the assignment guidelines and marking rubric. If you are not satisfied with your discussion with me, you may apply for a formal grade review, and I can help you navigate how to do that (see link later in syllabus).

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY

Enrolment at Camosun assumes that the student will become a responsible member of the College community. As such, each student will display a positive work ethic, assist in the preservation of College property, and assume responsibility for their education by researching academic requirements and policies; demonstrating courtesy and respect toward others; and respecting expectations concerning attendance, assignments, deadlines, and appointments.

SUPPORTS AND SERVICES FOR STUDENTS

Camosun College offers a number of services to help you succeed in and out of the classroom. For a detailed overview of the supports and services visit camosun.ca/services.

Support Service	Website
Academic Advising	camosun.ca/services/academic-supports/academic-advising
Accessible Learning	camosun.ca/services/academic-supports/accessible-learning
Counselling	camosun.ca/services/health-and-wellness/counselling-centre
Career Services	camosun.ca/services/co-operative-education-and-career-services
Financial Aid and Awards	camosun.ca/registration-records/financial-aid-awards
Help Centres (Math/English/Science)	camosun.ca/services/academic-supports/help-centres
Indigenous Student Support	camosun.ca/programs-courses/iecc/indigenous-student-services
International Student Support	camosun.ca/international
Learning Skills	camosun.ca/services/academic-supports/help-centres/writing-centre-learning-skills

Support Service	Website
Library	camosun.ca/services/library
Office of Student Support	camosun.ca/services/office-student-support
Ombudsperson	camosun.ca/services/ombudsperson
Registration	camosun.ca/registration-records/registration
Technology Support	camosun.ca/services/its
Writing Centre	camosun.ca/services/academic-supports/help-centres/writing-centre-learning-skills

If you have a mental health concern, please contact Counselling to arrange an appointment as soon as possible. Counselling sessions are available at both campuses during business hours. If you need urgent support after-hours, please contact the Vancouver Island Crisis Line at 1-888-494-3888 or call 911.

COLLEGE-WIDE POLICIES, PROCEDURES, REQUIREMENTS, AND STANDARDS

Academic Integrity

Students are expected to comply with all College policy regarding academic integrity; which is about honest and ethical behaviour in your education journey. The following guide is designed to help you understand your responsibilities: <https://camosun.libguides.com/academicintegrity/welcome>
Please visit <https://camosun.ca/sites/default/files/2021-05/e-1.13.pdf> for Camosun's Academic Integrity policy and details for addressing and resolving matters of academic misconduct.

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Camosun College is committed to achieving full accessibility for persons with disabilities. Part of this commitment includes arranging appropriate academic accommodations for students with disabilities to ensure they have an equitable opportunity to participate in all of their academic activities. If you are a student with a documented disability and think you may need accommodations, you are strongly encouraged to contact the Centre for Accessible Learning (CAL) and register as early as possible. Please visit the CAL website for more information about the process of registering with CAL, including important deadlines: <https://camosun.ca/cal>

Academic Progress

Please visit <https://camosun.ca/sites/default/files/2023-02/e-1.1.pdf> for further details on how Camosun College monitors students' academic progress and what steps can be taken if a student is at risk of not meeting the College's academic progress standards.

Course Withdrawals Policy

Please visit <https://camosun.ca/sites/default/files/2021-05/e-2.2.pdf> for further details about course withdrawals. For deadline for fees, course drop dates, and tuition refund, please visit <https://camosun.ca/registration-records/tuition-fees#deadlines>.

Grading Policy

Please visit <https://camosun.ca/sites/default/files/2021-05/e-1.5.pdf> for further details about grading.

Grade Review and Appeals

Please visit <https://camosun.ca/sites/default/files/2021-05/e-1.14.pdf> for policy relating to requests for review and appeal of grades.

Medical / Compassionate Withdrawals

Students who are incapacitated and unable to complete or succeed in their studies by virtue of serious and demonstrated exceptional circumstances may be eligible for a medical/compassionate withdrawal (see [Medical/Compassionate Withdrawals policy](#)). Please visit <https://camosun.ca/services/forms#medical> to learn more about the process involved in a medical/compassionate withdrawal.

Sexual Violence

Camosun is committed to creating a campus culture of safety, respect, and consent. Camosun's Office of Student Support is responsible for offering support to students impacted by sexual violence. Regardless of when or where the sexual violence occurred, students can access support at Camosun. The Office of Student Support will make sure students have a safe and private place to talk and will help them understand what supports are available and their options for next steps. The Office of Student Support respects a student's right to choose what is right for them. For more information see Camosun's Sexualized Violence Policy: <https://camosun.ca/sites/default/files/2021-05/e-2.9.pdf> and camosun.ca/services/sexual-violence-support-and-education.

To contact the Office of Student Support: oss@camosun.ca or by phone: 250-370-3046 or 250-370-3841

Student Misconduct (Non-Academic)

Camosun College is committed to building the academic competency of all students, seeks to empower students to become agents of their own learning, and promotes academic belonging for everyone. Camosun also expects that all students to conduct themselves in a manner that contributes to a positive, supportive, and safe learning environment. Please review Camosun College's Student Misconduct Policy at <https://camosun.ca/sites/default/files/2021-05/e-2.5.pdf> to understand the College's expectations of academic integrity and student behavioural conduct.

Looking for other policies?

The full suite of College policies and directives can be found here: <https://camosun.ca/about/camosun-college-policies-and-directives>

Changes to this syllabus: Every effort has been made to ensure that information in this syllabus is accurate at the time of publication. The College reserves the right to change courses if it becomes necessary so that course content remains relevant. In such cases, the instructor will give the students clear and timely notice of the changes.

