

COURSE SYLLABUS



COURSE TITLE: ENGL-288: Literature & Popular Culture

CLASS SECTION: 001

TERM: Fall 2023

COURSE CREDITS: 3

DELIVERY METHOD(S): In-person | W/F 10-11:20am in Fisher 302

Camosun College campuses are located on the traditional territories of the Ləkʷəŋən and W̱SÁNEĆ peoples. We acknowledge their welcome and graciousness to the students who seek knowledge here.

Learn more about Camosun's [Territorial Acknowledgement](#).

INSTRUCTOR DETAILS

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

EMAIL: niemannj@camosun.ca

OFFICE: Paul 320

HOURS: Wednesdays from 11:30-12:30 and Thursdays from 11:30-2:30, or by appointment (this time is set aside specifically 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 you to 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-288: Literature & Popular Culture, which introduces you to common pop cultural genres as well as theories of pop culture. My name is Janice, and I will be your fearless leader throughout our journey together. The goal of ENGL-288 is to give you the skills to analyze, interpret, and thinking critically about the media that you consume on a daily basis, as well as the skills that you need to research and write about literature and media. We'll also spend some time thinking through what actually counts as literature, who gets to decide that, and why pop culture is important. I am very excited to be here, and I hope that you are too! **Note: some assigned texts for this course are sexually explicit.**

The overarching theme for our course is, in the immortal words of Salt-N-Pepa, "let's talk about sex," but we'll also talk about many other thematic threads that run through our readings. The texts that we'll be studying in this course are the stories that we don't usually study—we'll be reading fan fiction, listening to music, watching TV and movies, and reading comic books. You'll also get the chance to choose what we study for a week at the end of term. In order to demonstrate your analytical and interpretive skills, you'll write one close reading assignment, give a presentation in pairs or groups of three in which you critically assess and lead a class discussion on a piece of criticism, and write a final paper (plus a proposal due a few weeks before) in which you analyze two texts in relation to each other (it could be two texts from the syllabus, one text from the syllabus and one text from outside the syllabus, or one text from the syllabus and one text that outlines a theoretical framework that you're applying). You'll also have a final exam during the exam period, as well as surprise reading quizzes throughout the semester (I'll give 7 quizzes, and you'll get to keep your top 5 marks).

CALENDAR DESCRIPTION

This course introduces theories about pop-culture texts, their makers, receivers, and cultural interconnections. Student will interpret and write about texts from popular culture sources, e.g. graphic novels, lyrics, films, performance, orature, cyber media. In addition, they will analyse genres in relation to cultural representations of identity, subculture, and literary expression.

PREREQUISITE(S):

One of:

- C in ENGL 161
- C in ENGL 163
- C in ENGL 164

CO-REQUISITE(S):

Not Applicable

EXCLUSION(S):

Not Applicable

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES / OBJECTIVES

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

1. Analyse the theoretical positions of a range of different texts.
2. Demonstrate how the processes of reading and interpretation are contested and debated.
3. Identify important themes in popular culture and literary texts.
4. Compare and contrast various texts, authors, and theories within the field of popular culture.
5. Evaluate a range of methodologies available for interpreting literature and culture.
6. Write and orally communicate arguments effectively.
7. Support written work and oral presentations with relevant evidence and support.
8. Document source material with current MLA conventions.

REQUIRED MATERIALS & RECOMMENDED PREPARATION / INFORMATION

You'll need three physical books for this course, all of which are available at the bookstore:

- *Fables, volume 1: Legends in Exile* by Bill Willingham, DC Comics, 2002
- *Trans Wizard Harriet Porber and the Theater of Love* by Chuck Tingle, 2021
- *The Many Deaths of Laila Starr* by Ram V & Filipe Andrade, BOOM! Studios, 2022

You'll also need to access the following digital media via various streaming services:

- *Our Flag Means Death*, season 1, 2022 (TV show, available on Crave)
- *Prey*, 2022 (movie, available on Disney+)
- *Fleabag*, season 2, 2019 (TV show, available on Prime)
- *When Harry Met Sally...*, 1989 (movie, available to rent on Cineplex or buy on YouTube)
- *Legally Blonde*, 2001 (movie, available on Crave, Prime)
- *Fire Island*, 2022 (movie, available on Disney+)

All of our other readings 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 week, including supplemental readings (short essays, articles, or pieces of literary or cultural commentary to complement our discussions

and main assigned text). **You should be checking D2L every week to make sure that you are caught up and on track.**

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 on D2L by 11:59pm on the day that they're due** (due dates listed below and posted on D2L).

WEEK & DATE RANGE	TOPIC & ASSIGNED READING	DUE DATES
1 Sept 6 & 8	Introduction If you get a chance, look over the syllabus and our D2L page before class	
	Music & short films "All Too Well" by Taylor Swift "the film" by boygenius	
2 Sept 13 & 15	Music & celebrating queer sexuality <i>The Age of Pleasure</i> by Janelle Monáe	
	Intro to comics Readings posted to D2L	
3 Sept 20 & 22	Comics & adapting the classics <i>Fables</i> , ch. 1-2	
	Genre, setting, & comic form <i>Fables</i> , ch. 3-5	
4 Sept 27 & 29	Music videos & sex on screen "Introvert" by Little Simz "I Just Had Sex" by The Lonely Island "Straight Outta Vagina" by Pussy Riot "Montero" by Lil Nas X "Water Slide" by Janelle Monáe	
	Music videos, continued No primary-text readings for today (check D2L for secondary readings) – we'll finish up talking about music videos and presentation skills	
5 Oct 4 & 6	Fanfic & metanarrative <i>Trans Wizard Harriet Porber and the Theater of Love</i> by Chuck Tingle, ch. 1-5 (*this novel is sexually explicit)	Close reading due Fri, Oct 6
	Fanfic & celebrating trans sexuality <i>Harriet Porber</i> , ch. 6-10	

WEEK & DATE RANGE	TOPIC & ASSIGNED READING	DUE DATES
6 Oct 11 & 13	Fanfic & parody <i>Harriet Porber</i> , ch. 11-16	
	TV & historical fiction <i>Our Flag Means Death</i> , episodes 1-3	
7 Oct 18 & 20	Gay pirates & celebrating masculinity <i>OFMD</i> , episodes 4-7	
	Queer romcoms & cult followings <i>OFMD</i> , episodes 8-10	
8 Oct 25 & 27	OFMD fanfic Come to class with your favourite piece of <i>OFMD</i> season 1 fanfic (if you don't know where to find fanfic, I recommend starting with AO3 [Archive of Our Own])	
	Spooky Special: sci fi & Indigenous language revitalization <i>Prey</i>	
9 Nov 1 & 3	TV & breaking the fourth wall <i>Fleabag</i> , season 2, episodes 1-3	
	Sex, love, & chastity <i>Fleabag</i> , episodes 4-6	
10 Nov 8	Pop culture & academic research Check D2L for readings	
	Comics & magical realism <i>The Many Deaths of Laila Starr</i> by Ram V & Filipe Andrade, chapters 1-2	
11 Nov 15 & 17	Death, rebirth, & mortality <i>Laila Starr</i> , chapters 3-5	Paper proposal due Fri, Nov 17
	Romcoms & fake orgasms <i>When Harry Met Sally...</i>	
12 Nov 22 & 24	Romcoms & "bimbo feminism" <i>Legally Blonde</i>	
	Queer romcoms & adapting the classics <i>Fire Island</i>	
13 Nov 29 & Dec 1	Choose your own adventure! You'll have the chance to decide together what we'll cover this week	

WEEK & DATE RANGE	TOPIC & ASSIGNED READING	DUE DATES
	Choose your own adventure! You'll have the chance to decide together what we'll cover this week	
14 Dec 6 & 8	Wrap up	Final paper due Fri, Dec 8
	Wrap up & exam review	

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](http://camosun.ca/services/accessible-learning/exams.html). <http://camosun.ca/services/accessible-learning/exams.html>

EVALUATION OF LEARNING

DESCRIPTION	WEIGHTING
Close reading (700-800 words)	15%
Presentation & discussion takeover	20%
Paper proposal	5%
Final paper (2000-2200 words)	25%
Final exam	25%
Reading quizzes (5 x 2% each)	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](http://camosun.ca/about/policies/education-academic/e-1-programming-and-instruction/e-1.14.pdf) policy for more information.

<http://camosun.ca/about/policies/education-academic/e-1-programming-and-instruction/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 reading (or watching or listening) 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, and coming to class with thoughts, questions, or ideas for discussion each week will help you be successful and learn the most in 288.

Late assignments

I have a 48-hour grace period for each assignment, and then 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**. 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 due date, and let me know 1) that you need an extension, and 2) when you're planning to submit your assignment. You do not need to send me documentation or details. 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 half of your grade for the course. If you hand in your assignments on time, I will give you detailed comments and feedback before your next assignment is due; if you hand in assignments after the original due dates listed, I will not give you detailed written feedback, 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 only for 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

Although I do not give a mark for attendance, you won't know ahead of time when your reading quizzes will be (they make up 10% of your final grade), so you'll need to be in class to write them. 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. It also allows me to assess which aspects of the course and texts you understand well, and which topics I need to review further.

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 if your child is 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-288 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), violates the college's policy on academic integrity. It is important to acknowledge your sources for a number of reasons: you are 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 topic. 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 (see 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) in the course if you do not submit the following: close reading, presentation, final paper, 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 <http://camosun.ca/students/>.

Academic Advising	http://camosun.ca/advising
Accessible Learning	http://camosun.ca/accessible-learning
Counselling	http://camosun.ca/counselling
Career Services	http://camosun.ca/coop
Financial Aid and Awards	http://camosun.ca/financialaid
Help Centres (Math/English/Science)	http://camosun.ca/help-centres
Indigenous Student Support	http://camosun.ca/indigenous
International Student Support	http://camosun.ca/international/
Learning Skills	http://camosun.ca/learningskills
Library	http://camosun.ca/services/library/
Office of Student Support	http://camosun.ca/oss
Ombudsperson	http://camosun.ca/ombuds

Registration	http://camosun.ca/registration
Technology Support	http://camosun.ca/its
Writing Centre	http://camosun.ca/writing-centre

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 Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

The College is committed to providing appropriate and reasonable academic accommodations to students with disabilities (i.e. physical, depression, learning, etc). If you have a disability, the [Centre for Accessible Learning](#) (CAL) can help you document your needs, and where disability-related barriers to access in your courses exist, create an accommodation plan. By making a plan through CAL, you can ensure you have the appropriate academic accommodations you need without disclosing your diagnosis or condition to course instructors. Please visit the CAL website for contacts and to learn how to get started:

<http://camosun.ca/services/accessible-learning/>

Academic Integrity

Please visit <http://camosun.ca/about/policies/education-academic/e-1-programming-and-instruction/e-1.13.pdf> for policy regarding academic expectations and details for addressing and resolving matters of academic misconduct.

Academic Progress

Please visit <http://camosun.ca/about/policies/education-academic/e-1-programming-and-instruction/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 <http://camosun.ca/about/policies/education-academic/e-2-student-services-and-support/e-2.2.pdf> for further details about course withdrawals. For deadline for fees, course drop dates, and tuition refund, please visit <http://camosun.ca/learn/fees/#deadlines>.

Grading Policy

Please visit <http://camosun.ca/about/policies/education-academic/e-1-programming-and-instruction/e-1.5.pdf> for further details about grading.

Grade Review and Appeals

Please visit <http://camosun.ca/about/policies/education-academic/e-1-programming-and-instruction/e-1.14.pdf> for policy relating to requests for review and appeal of grades.

Mandatory Attendance for First Class Meeting of Each Course

Camosun College requires mandatory attendance for the first class meeting of each course. If you do not attend, and do not provide your instructor with a reasonable reason in advance, you will be removed from the course and the space offered to the next waitlisted student. For more information, please see the “Attendance” section under “Registration Policies and Procedures”

(<http://camosun.ca/learn/calendar/current/procedures.html>) and the Grading Policy at <http://camosun.ca/about/policies/education-academic/e-1-programming-and-instruction/e-1.5.pdf>.

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. Please visit <http://camosun.ca/about/policies/education-academic/e-2-student-services-and-support/e-2.8.pdf> to learn more about the process involved in a medical/compassionate withdrawal.

Sexual Violence and Misconduct

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 or misconduct 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 and Misconduct Policy: <http://camosun.ca/about/policies/education-academic/e-2-student-services-and-support/e-2.9.pdf> and camosun.ca/sexual-violence. To contact the Office of Student Support: oss@camosun.ca or by phone: 250-370-3046 or 250-3703841

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 <http://camosun.ca/about/policies/education-academic/e-2-student-services-and-support/e-2.5.pdf> to understand the College’s expectations of academic integrity and student behavioural conduct.

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.