



**CAMOSUN COLLEGE**  
**School of Arts & Science**  
**Department of English**

**ENGL-164-D01**  
**Indigenous Literature**  
**Winter 2021**

*“Indigenous peoples are time travellers and shape-shifters, ghosts and astronauts. Some of us are already on our way to the future, but we are not yet there.”*

—Billy-Ray Belcourt (Driftpile Cree)

**COURSE OUTLINE**

The course description is online @ <http://camosun.ca/learn/calendar/current/web/engl.html>

□ Please note: This outline will not be kept indefinitely. It is recommended students keep this outline for their records, especially to assist in transfer credit to post-secondary institutions.

**1. Instructor Information**

My name is Michael Stewart. I was born in Anishinaabe, Delaware and Haudenosaunee territory in London, Ontario. I’m of German and Scottish ancestry and I have been a visitor on Lkwungen and W̱SÁNEĆ lands since 2015. I’m grateful for the opportunity to teach this class, and I thank my Camosun colleagues in the English Department’s Indigenization Working Group, and especially Julian Gunn, for their guidance and contributions to the shape and content of this course. The original shape of this course owes an incredible debt to the guidance of my friend and former colleague June Scudeler (Métis), the Indigenous faculty at the University of British Columbia, and the teachers and elders at Camosun’s Eyē? Sqā’lewen for their advice and support.

|     |               |  |
|-----|---------------|--|
| (a) | Instructor:   | Michael Stewart  |
| (b) | Office Hours: | Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays 2:30 – 3:30 or by appt.          |
| (c) | Location:     | N/A ☹  |
| (d) | Phone:        | N/A  |
| (e) | Email:        | <a href="mailto:stewartm@camosun.bc.ca">stewartm@camosun.bc.ca</a> |

**2. Intended Learning Outcomes**

In reading literature, students will be encouraged to make connections, consider meaning, make and support inferences, and evaluate. At the end of the course students will be able to:

1. Analyze Indigenous literature from both the oral and written traditions.
2. Analyze Indigenous pre-contact literature in the genres of song, prayer, and storytelling by addressing their roles within Indigenous communities.
3. Analyze Indigenous literature in the post-contact period through the genres of poetry, fiction, non-fiction and drama.
4. 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. At the end of the course students will be able to:

1. Identify the continuing inter-relationship of Indigenous pre-contact literatures with the written tradition.
2. Examine Eurocentric notions of literal and figurative meaning in relation to Indigenous literature.

3. Use literary terms such as metaphor, irony, character, setting, and plot.
4. Describe the significance of differing literary interpretations from Native and non-Native perspectives.
5. Use vocabulary associated with analyzing fiction, poetry, drama, and non-fiction.
6. Analyze themes common to Indigenous literature.
7. 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. At the end of this course students will be able to:

1. Use a critical approach with appropriate language and terminology.
2. Clarify, articulate and support a position, while remaining open to, and acknowledging, other possible interpretations.
3. Evaluate specific literary techniques.
4. Employ close reading skills.
5. 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.
6. Produce writing under exam or exam-like conditions.
7. 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:

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

### 3. Required Materials

**Texts (Available at Camosun Bookstore through safe pick-up, online or from your local independent bookseller)**

*An Anthology of Indigenous Literatures in English: Voices from Canada*. 5th ed., edited by Armand Garnet Ruffo and Katherena Vermette. Oxford UP, 2020.

Whitehead, Joshua. *Jonny Appleseed*. Arsenal, 2018.

*The Body Remembers when the World Broke Open*. Directed by Elle-Máijá Tailfeathers and Kathleen Hepburn, performances by Elle-Máijá Tailfeathers and Violet Nelson. levelFILM, 2019. **(Available on CBC Gem and Google Play)**

## 4. Course Content and Schedule

Thursdays, 3:00 – 4:20 pm online via Collaborate (mandatory)

## 5. Basis of Student Assessment (Weighting)

| Assignment                                   | Deadline                 | Weighting                |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Positionality Exercise: “Tante ohci kīya?”   | Jan 22                   | 5% (Complete/Incomplete) |
| Storytelling Exercise: “Tell it again”       | Feb 8                    | 5% (Complete/Incomplete) |
| Reflections                                  | Four throughout the term | 10%                      |
| Literary Essay: <i>Jonny Appleseed</i>       | Mar 15                   | 25%                      |
| Creative Response: <i>The Body Remembers</i> | Mar 29                   | 15%                      |
| Wonderworks project                          | April 12                 | 10%                      |
| Final exam                                   | TBD                      | 20%                      |
| Participation                                | All. Course. Long.       | 10%                      |

## 7. Additional Comments

- **A note on first principles:** In this class, we will debate and discuss many things as we explore the diverse, rich and powerful literatures of Indigenous writers and artists. **One thing not up for debate is the identity, self-determination and sovereignty of Indigenous people.** That means that the multiple and deep harms of colonialism—the dispossession of land and self-determining authority by a dominant settler system of governance and culture—are also not up for debate. **This is not meant to limit discussion;** on the contrary, it will provide a starting point from which edifying, enriching and mutually instructive conversations can develop and flourish.

If you would like to discuss any of these issues, you are welcome to make an appointment with me and we can converse in my office—not in the online learning environment.

- All readings must be completed **before the class assigned to them.** Bring the readings with you to the online learning sessions.
- **Participation is worth a hefty 10%,** so please bring your brilliant ideas and observations to our online sessions and to the weekly discussion boards too. Attending our online sessions, preparing well and bringing an inquisitive, generous and energetic spirit not only shows all of us you respect the learning environment, it will put you in a great position to succeed on the assignments. This will be the easiest 10% you make all year so make the most of it. And, of course, the more we participate, the more fun we all will have. It will be so much fun I can't stand it.
- **Start working right away.** Life comes at you fast. And by life, I mean deadlines. Don't procrastinate, do the readings and don't underestimate how long an assignment will take. If you get a disappointing grade on an early assignment, make adjustments – don't assume the same level of work will get you a better mark later. Spoiler: it won't.
- **Deadlines:** Deadlines are organized to facilitate marking and returning papers in a timely manner, and to give you the greatest benefit from feedback for future assignments. They also establish that I am a human,

with a life, and give me some surety around which I may organize this life.

Late assignments will be docked a 5% per day penalty. However, **you have a one-time amnesty for a single take-home assignment**. This is to recognize that you, too, are humans with lives, and that sometimes those get in the way of coursework. I want to give you the best chance to succeed in the course, but please respect the above. **You must let me know in advance of the deadline that an assignment will be late.**

Late work may not be handed back in a timely manner and may not receive extensive feedback.

- Any submission of work that is not the student's or work that is not appropriately attributed to the original source constitutes plagiarism. **The college considers plagiarism a serious offence** and any attempt to deceive the instructor with plagiarized work will be met with serious consequences, which will at a minimum include a zero on the assignment and could include an F in the course.
- **Make use of my office hours and email.** It is my sincere hope that we can work together to become better writers and thinkers. A live 5-10 minute chat about a paper, an essay or a topic can do wonders. If you are unclear about assignments, about a grade, about anything, visit my office hours or write me a thoughtful email. This will not only help your grade it will help me become a better teacher.
- Any student who faces challenges **securing their food or housing** and believes this may affect their performance in the course is urged to contact the appropriate Camosun services (listed below) for support. If you are comfortable in doing so, please notify me of any challenges you're facing. This will enable me to accommodate your challenge and provide any support I am able.

## 8. College Supports, Services and Policies



### Immediate, Urgent, or Emergency Support

If you or someone you know requires immediate, urgent, or emergency support (e.g. illness, injury, thoughts of suicide, sexual assault, etc.), **SEEK HELP**. Resource contacts @ <http://camosun.ca/about/mental-health/emergency.html> or <http://camosun.ca/services/sexual-violence/get-support.html#urgent>

### College Services

Camosun offers a variety of health and academic support services, including counselling, dental, disability resource centre, help centre, learning skills, sexual violence support & education, library, and writing centre. For more information on each of these services, visit the **STUDENT SERVICES** link on the College website at <http://camosun.ca/>

### College Policies

Camosun strives to provide clear, transparent, and easily accessible policies that exemplify the college's commitment to life-changing learning. It is the student's responsibility to become familiar with the content of College policies. Policies are available on the College website at <http://camosun.ca/about/policies/>. Education and academic policies include, but are not limited to, Academic Progress, Admission, Course Withdrawals, Standards for Awarding Credentials, Involuntary Health and Safety Leave of Absence, Prior Learning Assessment, Medical/Compassionate Withdrawal, Sexual Violence, Student Ancillary Fees, Academic Integrity, Grade Review & Appeals, Student Misconduct and Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities and Student Penalties and Fines.

## A. GRADING SYSTEMS <http://camosun.ca/about/policies/index.html>

### 1. Standard Grading System (GPA)

| Percentage | Grade | Description | Grade Point Equivalency |
|------------|-------|-------------|-------------------------|
| 90-100     | A+    |             | 9                       |

|       |    |                                      |   |
|-------|----|--------------------------------------|---|
| 85-89 | A  |                                      | 8 |
| 80-84 | A- |                                      | 7 |
| 77-79 | B+ |                                      | 6 |
| 73-76 | B  |                                      | 5 |
| 70-72 | B- |                                      | 4 |
| 65-69 | C+ |                                      | 3 |
| 60-64 | C  |                                      | 2 |
| 50-59 | D  |                                      | 1 |
| 0-49  | F  | Minimum level has not been achieved. | 0 |

## B. TEMPORARY GRADES

Temporary grades are assigned for specific circumstances and will convert to a final grade according to the grading scheme being used in the course. See Grading Policy at <http://camosun.ca/about/policies/index.html> for information on conversion to final grades, and for additional information on student record and transcript notations.

| Temporary Grade | Description   |
|-----------------|---|
| I               | <i>Incomplete:</i> A temporary grade assigned when the requirements of a course have not yet been completed due to hardship or extenuating circumstances, such as illness or death in the family.   |
| IP              | <i>In progress:</i> A temporary grade assigned for courses that are designed to have an anticipated enrollment that extends beyond one term. No more than two IP grades will be assigned for the same course.   |
| CW              | <i>Compulsory Withdrawal:</i> A temporary grade assigned by a Dean when an instructor, after documenting the prescriptive strategies applied and consulting with peers, deems that a student is unsafe to self or others and must be removed from the lab, practicum, worksite, or field placement. |