**30.145 Contemporary Literature**

Winter 2024



**Instructor**: Dr. Reinhold Kramer

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**Course Description:** This survey introduces students to a rich variety of fiction, poetry, and drama in English. Each section of the course is unique, is designed for student to learn the vocabulary of literary studies, and may focus on a particular nation or cultural theme. We will emphasize writing skills, with at least three essay assignments, and students will receive help, wherever needed, in planning, developing, and writing effective essays.

Margaret Atwood

**Assignments:**

 1. Reading tests (on entire novels) **24 January, 18 March**  10%

 2. Class Participation 5%

 3. In-class Essay (5 pages) **19 January**  10%

 4. Atwood Essay (5 pages) **due 14 February**  15%

 5. Poetry Essay (5 pages) **due 15 March**  15%

 6. Grammar test **25 March**  10%

 7. Final Exam **11 April, 9-11 a.m.**  35%

There may be penalties for late essays, depending upon circumstances. Reading tests cannot be postponed, and missed tests cannot be rewritten without a doctor’s note or other documentation. Cite all sources for ideas and quotations. Avoid AI and Grammarly-type programs. Assignments containing plagiarism will be graded “0” and result in disciplinary action. Please read BU *General Calendar* section 3.14 “Academic Dishonesty,” and *Writing English*, p. 420-8.

No cellphones during class.

For the very shy: in place of “class participation,” you may hand in, 5 times during the course, short (1-page, double-spaced, typed) analyses, not plot summaries, of the work under discussion that day. These commentaries must be handed in *before* the work is discussed in class and are worth 1% each. No commentaries will be accepted after class discussions for *any* reason.

Students who require disability accommodations should register with the Accessibility Services Coordinator, 204-727-9759, magnussonm@brandonu.ca. Student Services also offers personal counselling (contact 204-727-9737). If students find controversial readings and/or discussions troubling, please contact the instructor immediately about alternatives.

**Texts:**

Atwood, Margaret. *The Year of the Flood*

Bennett, Donna & Russell Brown. *An Anthology of Canadian Literature in English.* 4th ed.

French, David. *Saltwater Moon*

Messenger, William, et. al. *Writing English: The Canadian Handbook*

Vanderhaeghe, Guy. *My Present Age*

**Grading: Letter/Number/Grade Point**

Outstanding Good Satisfactory Weak Inadequate

A+ 90 & up 4.3 B+ 77-79 3.3 C+ 67-69 2.3 D 50-59 1.0 F 0-49

A 84-89 4.0 B 74-76 3.0 C 64-66 2.0

A- 80-83 3.7 B- 70-73 2.7 C- 60-63 1.7

**Tentative Schedule:** ***Writing English* readings (below)**

Jan. 5 McClung, “The Elusive Vote” (1912) [406-11]

 8 Wilson, “The Window” (1961) [382-4]

 10 Shields, “Hazel” (1989) [384-6]

 12 Mistry, “Swimming Lessons” (1987)

 15 Robinson, “Queen of the North” (1996) [174 Tense]

 17 David Bezmozgis, “Roman Berman, Massage Therapist” (2004)

 **19** **In-class essay**

22Redhill, “The Flesh Collectors” (2003)

Jan. 24 - Feb. 7 Atwood, *The Year of the Flood* (2009) [402-4; 420-8; 388-9; 286-8] [435-43]

Feb. 9 John K. Samson, “Letter in Icelandic from the Ninette San” (2012) Internet

 Christine Fellows, “Migrations” (2005) Internet

 12 Klein “Autobiographical” (1951) [34-5; 62-3; 7-13]

 **14** Nowlan, “Country Full of Christmas” (1969)

 “On the Barrens” (1977)

 **Atwood essay due**

 16 Birney, “The Ebb Begins from Dream” (1947) [97-8, 110-11]

 “Pacific Door” (1948)

 26 Wilkinson, “The Great Winds” (1951) [38-44; 126-7]

28 Atwood, “Tricks with Mirrors” (1974) [130-5; 14-17, 27-9]

Mar. 1 Purdy, “Lament for the Dorsets” (1968)

 “The Country North of Belleville” (1965)

 4McKay, “Short Fat Flicks” (1997)

 6 Mouré, “Blindness” (1985)

 Wallace, “The Woman in This Poem” (1987)

Mar. 8 Solie, “Sturgeon” (2001) [197, 167, 200]

 “Your Premiums Will Never Increase” (2015)

Mar. 11-15 French, *Saltwater Moon* (1985) [90-4; 52-5, 175]

**Mar. 15 Poetry essay due**

Mar. 18 - Apr. 3 Vanderhaeghe, *My Present Age* (1984) [58-62; 167-73; 173-4]

**Mar. 25** **Grammar test**

Apr. 5 Review

**Apr. 11 Final Exam, Thursday, 9-11 a.m.**