



ENGL*6811 Special Topics in English

Fall 2020

Section(s): 01

School of English and Theatre Studies

Credit Weight: 0.50

Version 2.00 - September 05, 2020

1 Course Details

1.1 Calendar Description

Depending on the research interests of the instructor, courses under this rubric explore topics in the study of literature that do not fall neatly under the rubrics above. In the past the course has dealt with literature and aging, and with issues in the field of popular culture.

1.2 Course Description

Terrorism in Fiction and Film

Through a range of literatures and film, this seminar explores fiction and non-fiction accounts of terrorism from the French Revolution to after 11 September. Various trajectories include 1880s-1920s (Russian) anarchism and 1960s-80s left-wing (revolutionary and nationalist) terrorism, as well as post 9/11 fiction that foregrounds global, historical, and cultural context. The relationship between nationalism and terrorism will be foregrounded through discussion of Falardeau's "Octobre," Selvadurai's *Funny Boy* and Waldman's *The Submission*.

1.3 Timetable

Tues. 2:30-4:30 pm

1.4 Final Exam

There is no exam.

2 Instructional Support

2.1 Instructional Support Team

Instructor: Sandra Singer

Email: ssinger@uoguelph.ca
Telephone: N/A
Office: N/A
Office Hours: I will not be holding regular office hours this semester but will be available to discuss class matters by email and virtual appointments. When emailing me, please use the course code as part of your title. If you are requesting an appointment, also indicate it in the title. I will respond to email within 48 hours (weekends excluded).

3 Learning Resources

3.1 Required Resources

Sandra Singer (Readings)

- Friedrich Dürrenmatt, *The Assignment: or, On the Observing of the Observer of the Observers*
- Shyam Selvadurai, *Funny Boy*
- Amy Waldman, *The Submission*

Required: Digitally accessed through the university library

- Judith Thompson, *Palace of the End*
 - Charles Townshend, *Terrorism: A Very Short Introduction* (2002)
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4 Learning Outcomes

4.1 Course Outcomes

By the end of ENGL 6811 you will have

- defined historical and theoretical concepts about terrorism as they evolved, and gained prominence in post-9/11 debates
- applied these core concepts to works of poetry, fiction, and film
- scrutinized works of terrorist fiction narratologically
- developed graduate-level writing and research skills through writing (including revision of) a research essay with at least 10 sources; beginning with a literature review guided by an independent research question, this final research essay will demonstrate mastery of textual analysis, secondary research, and theoretical awareness
- produced informed and engaging oral presentations, reflecting skills as a presenter and teacher through conducting the research necessary to guide seminar discussions of a

particular text or problematic

•recognized the validity of differing viewpoints while nurturing your own

5 Teaching and Learning Activities

5.1 Outline

Schedule of Readings

Students are expected to read material before class, and have a copy of course readings (hard copy or digital) in the seminar.

Unit 1: Origins of Terrorist Fiction: From the French Revolution (1789-1799) to the Russian Anarchist Model (1890-1936)

Sept. 15

- Reign of Terror during the French Revolution (1793-94)
- Russian Anarchism in the time of the Czar
- Introduction to female and male anarchists who impacted history, Emma Goldman's life-writing and Joseph Conrad's fictional university students Razumov and Haldin
- Emma Goldman and "propaganda by deed" (Townshend, *Terrorism* (pp. 13, 55)

Reading: Townshend, *Terrorism* (ch. 3, pp. 36-46)

- Goldman, *Living My Life* ch 8 & 9 <https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/emma-goldman-living-my-life>
 - Conrad, *Under Western Eyes* (from Project Gutenberg <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/2480/2480-h/2480-h.htm> up to "Razumov wondered why he had not cut short that talk and told this man to go away long before. Was it weakness or what?" in Part I)
 - Scanlan, Introduction, *Plotting Terror: Novelists and Terrorists in Contemporary Fiction*, pp. 7-11 on Conrad (Courselink)
- Posting 1 Prompt released (on Goldman and Conrad)

Sept. 18

Posting 1 due

Seminar Sign-up on Courselink

Unit 2: Nationalist and Left-Wing Terrorist Cells after World War II

Sept. 22 Reading: Barbara Melchiori on anarchists, socialists, and dynamite: "Peccant Engines" (excerpt on Courselink); Shyam Selvadurai, *Funny Boy* (ch. 1-4)
Discussion of requirements for Essay 1 (on *Funny Boy*)

Sept. 29 Reading: Shyam Selvadurai, *Funny Boy* (ch. 5-6); Townshend, *Terrorism* (ch. 5, pp. 74-95)

Oct. 6

Revisiting FLQ Terrorism and its Impact on Contemporary Canadian Politics

Reading: "Manifesto of the FLQ (1970)"

<http://faculty.marianopolis.edu/c.belanger/quebechistory/docs/october/manifest.htm> or
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_OCmYRSHD8I

- Townshend, *Terrorism* (ch. 4, pp. 53-73)

- Watch Pierre Falardeau, "Octobre" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GWsQZnstuoE>

Posting 2 Prompt released (on "Octobre")

Oct. 9 Posting 2 due

Oct. 20 Reading: "Academic Consensus Definition of Terrorism" (Courselink); Friedrich Dürrenmatt, *The Assignment: or, On the Observing of the Observer of the Observers* (pp. 1-46)
Essay 1 due

Oct. 27 Reading: Friedrich Dürrenmatt, *The Assignment* (pp. 47-end)
Posting 3 Prompt released (on *The Assignment*)

Oct. 30 Posting 3 due

Unit 3: Post-9/11: Foregrounding Global, Historical, and Cultural Context

Nov. 3

Reading: E. M. Forster, *Aspects of the Novel* on flat and round characters (Courselink); Judith Thompson, *Palace of the End*

Posting 4 Prompt released (on *Palace*)

Nov. 6 Posting 4 due

Nov. 10 Reading: Amy Waldman, *The Submission* (ch. 1-10); Sourcing Waldman's text <http://www.thirteen.org/metrofocus/2011/08/qa-with-amy-waldman-what-if-a-muslim-american-had-won-the-911-memorial-competition/>; Townshend, *Terrorism* (ch. 6, pp. 96-113)

Nov. 17 Reading: Waldman, *The Submission* (ch. 11-20); Heather E. Pope and Victoria M. Bryan, Introduction, *Reflecting 9/11*, pp. 1-7 (Courselink)

Nov. 24 Reading: Waldman, *The Submission* (ch. 20-25—ending “this was the truest submission”); Heather E. Pope, “*The Submission* to Internal Exceptionalism and Cultural Capital in Post-9/11 America” (Courselink)

Dec. 1 Reading: Waldman, *The Submission* (epilogue—after the tree motif); Paula Martín-Salván, “Public Art and Communal Space: The Politics of Commemoration in Amy Waldman's *The Submission*” (Courselink); Townshend, *Terrorism* (ch. 7, pp. 114-39)

Dec. 3
Literature Review and Thesis paragraph due

Essay due Dec. 17

6 Assessments

6.1 Marking Schemes & Distributions

Evaluation:

All course work is due by 11:59 pm on the date stated in the syllabus.

There are no extensions on the Discussion Questions (see details below).

Word limits are + or – 10%, so, for example, a 2000-word assignment could be between 1800 and 2200 words.

Discussion Board (225 words, best 3 of 4 postings, 5% each) 15%
 2 Class Presentations 30% total
 Essay 1 (1500 words) 20%
 Literature Review and Thesis paragraph for Essay 2 10%
 Essay 2 (3000 words) 25%

Discussion Board

Within Courselink, each student will be responsible for *entering the discussion* during assigned weeks. In a 150-word response, speak to a conference question that will be posed by the Instructor on the Courselink discussion board. This is a formal mode of communication different from social media. Make a draft of your thoughts, and proofread for spelling and grammar before sending. *Entering a discussion* means, **unless you are the first person responding, that in order to get full points you must speak to another student's insights**. Cited primary texts are not part of your Word Count. Posting prompts are released on the respective Tuesday at 2:30 pm, and due three days later, on Friday by 11:59 pm. *Late postings will not be accepted.*

Class Presentations

Class Presentation on Townshend's *Terrorism* or secondary critical essays 10%

A group of students will be in charge of the seminar for 15 min. total (timed). Offer a very brief exposition of the text and make links to ongoing course discussions. For your examples, however, **draw from events or texts outside of course material**. Allow for 5 min. of facilitated class discussion. No more than 5 slides of PowerPoint or Prezi are permitted.

Class Presentation on fiction 20%

A group of students will be in charge of the seminar for 20 min. total (timed). Seminars are assessed according to their strength as an oral presentation and for analytic sophistication, including the following: summary of the main point of the fictional text and secondary points; identifying principal theorists, and/or sources for ideas, and/or relationship to course themes. Refer to several important passages and explain their significance (e.g. narrative voice, literary devices, focalization, plot resolutions, etc.). Point out any intertextual, cultural, or historical references (you may wish to illustrate references with visuals). Include a 5-minute discussion facilitated by asking two or three questions about your text. No more than 7 slides of PowerPoint or Prezi are permitted.

Written work

Details regarding Essays 1 and 2 (including the thesis paragraph and literature review) will be posted on Courselink.

In this course, your instructor will be using Turnitin, integrated with the CourseLink Dropbox tool, to detect possible plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration or copying as part of the ongoing efforts to maintain academic integrity at the University of Guelph. All submitted assignments will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. Use of the Turnitin.com service is subject to the Usage Policy posted on the Turnitin.com site.

Late Penalty

5% deducted per day after the due date (including weekends). Missed coursework will receive a grade of "0" unless explanation of compassionate reason or significant health impact is received within one week after the missed work.

7 University Statements

7.1 Email Communication

As per university regulations, all students are required to check their e-mail account regularly: e-mail is the official route of communication between the University and its students.

7.2 When You Cannot Meet a Course Requirement

When you find yourself unable to meet an in-course requirement because of illness or compassionate reasons please advise the course instructor (or designated person, such as a teaching assistant) in writing, with your name, id#, and e-mail contact. The grounds for Academic Consideration are detailed in the Undergraduate and Graduate Calendars.

Undergraduate Calendar - Academic Consideration and Appeals

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-ac.shtml>

Graduate Calendar - Grounds for Academic Consideration

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/graduate/current/genreg/index.shtml>

Associate Diploma Calendar - Academic Consideration, Appeals and Petitions

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/diploma/current/index.shtml>

7.3 Drop Date

Students will have until the last day of classes to drop courses without academic penalty. The deadline to drop two-semester courses will be the last day of classes in the second semester. This applies to all students (undergraduate, graduate and diploma) except for Doctor of Veterinary Medicine and Associate Diploma in Veterinary Technology (conventional and alternative delivery) students. The regulations and procedures for course registration are available in their respective Academic Calendars.

Undergraduate Calendar - Dropping Courses

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-drop.shtml>

Graduate Calendar - Registration Changes

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/graduate/current/genreg/genreg-reg-regchg.shtml>

Associate Diploma Calendar - Dropping Courses

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/diploma/current/c08/c08-drop.shtml>

7.4 Copies of Out-of-class Assignments

Keep paper and/or other reliable back-up copies of all out-of-class assignments: you may be asked to resubmit work at any time.

7.5 Accessibility

The University promotes the full participation of students who experience disabilities in their academic programs. To that end, the provision of academic accommodation is a shared responsibility between the University and the student.

When accommodations are needed, the student is required to first register with Student Accessibility Services (SAS). Documentation to substantiate the existence of a disability is required; however, interim accommodations may be possible while that process is underway.

Accommodations are available for both permanent and temporary disabilities. It should be noted that common illnesses such as a cold or the flu do not constitute a disability.

Use of the SAS Exam Centre requires students to book their exams at least 7 days in advance and not later than the 40th Class Day.

For Guelph students, information can be found on the SAS website

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/sas>

For Ridgetown students, information can be found on the Ridgetown SAS website

<https://www.ridgetownc.com/services/accessibilityservices.cfm>

7.6 Academic Integrity

The University of Guelph is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity, and it is the responsibility of all members of the University community—faculty, staff, and students—to be aware of what constitutes academic misconduct and to do as much as possible to prevent academic offences from occurring. University of Guelph students have the responsibility of abiding by the University's policy on academic misconduct regardless of their location of study; faculty, staff, and students have the responsibility of supporting an environment that encourages academic integrity. Students need to remain aware that instructors have access to and the right to use electronic and other means of detection.

Please note: Whether or not a student intended to commit academic misconduct is not relevant for a finding of guilt. Hurried or careless submission of assignments does not excuse students from responsibility for verifying the academic integrity of their work before submitting it. Students who are in any doubt as to whether an action on their part could be construed as an academic offence should consult with a faculty member or faculty advisor.

Undergraduate Calendar - Academic Misconduct

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-amisconduct.shtml>

Graduate Calendar - Academic Misconduct

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/graduate/current/genreg/index.shtml>

7.7 Recording of Materials

Presentations that are made in relation to course work - including lectures - cannot be recorded or copied without the permission of the presenter, whether the instructor, a student, or guest lecturer. Material recorded with permission is restricted to use for that course unless further permission is granted.

7.8 Resources

The Academic Calendars are the source of information about the University of Guelph's procedures, policies, and regulations that apply to undergraduate, graduate, and diploma programs.

Academic Calendars

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/academics/calendars>

7.9 Disclaimer

Please note that the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic may necessitate a revision of the format of course offerings and academic schedules. Any such changes will be announced via CourseLink and/or class email. All University-wide decisions will be posted on the COVID-19 website (<https://news.uoguelph.ca/2019-novel-coronavirus-information/>) and circulated by email.

7.10 Illness

The University will not normally require verification of illness (doctor's notes) for fall 2020 or winter 2021 semester courses. However, requests for Academic Consideration may still require medical documentation as appropriate
