CONTEMPORARY MEDIA AND FICTION
English 230: An undergraduate course for 60 students
Fall 2022 at the University of Victoria
lə*k*ʷəŋən and W̱SÁNEĆ Territories
TWF, 1:30-2:20pm
Taught by Jentery Sayers (he / him)
With Babak Ashrafkhani, teaching assistant
Office hours: W, 12-1pm; Th, 12:30-1:30pm
jentery@uvic.ca

View this document online in HTML.

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Contents:

tl;dr Version of this Syllabus

In a rush? Overwhelmed by the start of term? Need a guide to steward you through this course?

I made a one-page, tl;dr version of this syllabus for you. I'll print you a PDF copy, too. This guide is not intended to replace the syllabus, but I hope it's convenient in a pinch.

Course Description

How do we not only *read* stories but also *see*, *hear*, *watch*, and *play* them? This course introduces you to media studies and how audio, images, text, and interfaces are designed for contemporary fiction. We'll study comics, animations, short fiction, dramatic podcasts, and games, and you'll learn how to write about media and fiction for a critical audience by integrating a range of media into your work. Since this course is an introduction, I'll assume you've never taken a class in media studies.

Please note: "media" in the title implies "audio, images, text, and interfaces," not news or communication outlets ("the media"). Thanks!

Aims

We designed this course for you to:

- Develop a vocabulary to approach media in the context of fiction and storytelling.
- Interpret what audio, images, text, and interfaces *do* in fiction. We'll practice various techniques for watching, reading, playing, and listening to the stories people make with media.
- Communicate critically with audio, images, text, and interfaces. You'll have opportunities to practice composing across these media, with an informed audience in mind.
- Use media as evidence in criticism. You'll integrate audio, images, quotations, and even video into your writing about fiction.

Each of these four outcomes should apply to work across disciplines and occupations, regardless of your occupational interests or major at UVic. They are useful whenever you're interpreting media or communicating online, for example.

About Us

My name is Jentery Sayers (he / him). I skip a syllable and say it in two: "JEN-tree." I spend 14.32% of the day looking for my glasses, and I enjoy writing about audio, games, and experimental fiction. I grew up in Richmond, Virginia and went to Virginia Commonwealth University for my BA and BS degrees. Then I moved to Seattle, where I received an MA and PhD in English from the University of Washington. I've been at UVic, on lək̓ʷəŋən and WSÁNEĆ territories, since 2011. I teach courses for UVic English, and I direct the Praxis Studio for Comparative Media Studies. You can email me at jentery@uvic.ca.

(More about Babak coming soon.)

Assignments

We're back on campus during COVID-19. These are complex and overwhelming times, so we'll try to keep this course as simple and clear as possible.

We're asking you to complete only **four writing assignments** this term, each 25% of your final mark. You'll have an opportunity to **revise one** of your first three assignments to improve your mark.

For each assignment, you will respond briefly to a prompt (available in Brightspace) through a combination of audio, images, video, and/or text. The prompt will ask you to examine assigned materials, with attention to detail, from a critical perspective. It will also

nudge you to enact a media study of fiction: to demonstrate concepts from class and to perform techniques discussed during workshops and lectures.

Each response will be assessed based on a rubric provided in the prompt itself, and you will submit all four responses via Brightspace. (Please do not submit them via email or in print.)

This means there are no research papers, presentations, or discussion forums in this course. There are no exams, either.

As for scheduling, you will know 50% of your final mark by Tuesday, October 25th and 75% by Tuesday, November 15th. Optional revisions to one response will be due by Friday, December 2nd, and your fourth and final response to a prompt will be due by Tuesday, December 13th (during the exam period).

Structure

We'll meet three days a week (TWF) from 1:30 to 2:20pm. A typical week will include a lecture, a large group discussion about a particular work, and a workshop on critical media literacy. We will use Word in Microsoft Office 365 to provide you with detailed lecture notes (available online) alongside audio recordings (in Brightspace) of class meetings. These notes and recordings are to be used solely for the sake of the course (and for making it more accessible to you). They should *not* be circulated outside of it. Feedback on this approach is welcome from you along the way.

For details about what we will discuss and when, see the schedule below.

Workload

The most important thing to know about this course is that *we'll opt for care in every instance.* If the workload becomes too much, or we're juggling more than we should, then we'll cut materials. We've planned for the maximum in advance, under the assumption that we won't get to everything. And that's totally fine.

We suggest dedicating to this course 3 to 5 hours of study each week, plus 3 hours for weekly meetings (TWF). To frame expectations and decrease overwork, we assign to each week in the schedule a number of recommended hours. Of course, 3 to 5 hours per week is only a guideline. You may find that you need more or less time depending on the activity, your preferences, and your own familiarity with the work and materials involved.

In Brightspace, we will also message you once each week with an update on how the course is progressing and what you may wish to consider as we move forward (to plan for reading, assignments, due dates, and whatnot).

Materials

Here's a list of works ("assigned texts") we'll study this term. You need to purchase only the first one (Bechdel's *Fun Home*, which is $25 new and $19 used). The rest are available either online (public) or in Brightspace (private to the class). If you'd like to purchase some of the games, then feel free, especially if you decide to write about them.

- The graphic novel and memoir, *Fun Home* (2006), by Alison Bechdel (*please purchase*)
- The comic, "Translated, From the Japanese" (2015; excerpts), by Adrian Tomine
- The short fiction, "Message in a Bottle" (2004), by Nalo Hopkinson
- The interactive fiction, *With Those We Love Alive* (2014), by Porpentine Charity Heartscape and Brenda Neotenomie
- The text-based animation, *THE M00D 0F THE M0MENT* (2007), by Young-Hae Chang Heavy Industries
- The animated short film, *Biidaaban (The Dawn Comes)* (2018), by Amanda Strong and Leanne Betasamosake Simpson
- The role-playing game, *Undertale* (2015), by Toby Fox and Temmie Chang
- The platforming game, *Celeste* (2018), by Extremely Ok
- The walking sim, *Gone Home* (2013), by the Fullbright Company
- The adventure puzzle game, *Secrets Agent* (2014), by Marina Kittaka
- The dramatic podcast, *Within the Wires* (2016), by Jeffrey Cranor, Janina Matthewson, and Mary Epworth
- The blog series, *50 Years of Text Games: From Oregon Trail to A.I. Dungeon* (2021), by Aaron A. Reed

If this ends up being too much for the term, then we'll cut material or some of it will become optional.

We'll also provide you with notes and audio that will document material from lectures and discussions. The notes will be circulated online as a Word doc in Microsoft Office 365, and we will invite you to comment, converse, and ask questions in the margins. The audio will be available in Brightspace. Again, we ask that you do not circulate the recordings or notes beyond the course. Thanks a bunch.

You do not need to purchase any software for this course; however, you'll need access to the internet and a computer. We will use Brightspace and Word for Office 365, both provided by UVic. If you've never used Microsoft Office 365 at UVic, then you may need to activate it first by visiting onlineservices.uvic.ca.

Schedule

Here's the schedule for the term. It's subject to change. We will use a Brightspace announcement to notify you at least two weeks in advance of any changes, and we will never use schedule changes to increase your workload. In Brightspace, we will also update you each week as to how the course is progressing.

Week 1 (Sept. 7 + 9): Hello!

This week should consume no more than two hours of your time outside of class.

Wednesday, September 7th

- There's no need to prep for our first meeting. We'll introduce ourselves and talk about the course.
- Consider purchasing a copy of *Fun Home*, if you've not already.

Friday, September 9th

- Take a moment to scan the course outline and review the course policies.
- Email us any questions or concerns you have about the course and its syllabus.
- Expect a lecture introducing you to some important "media and fiction" themes in the course.

Week 2 (Sept. 13, 14 + 16): Mood and Modality

This week should consume no more than three hours of your time outside of class.

Tuesday, September 13th

- Watch Young-Hae Chang Heavy Industries' *THE M00D 0F THE M0MENT* and complete the worksheet for it (see Brightspace attachment). Ensure the audio is enabled. CW: flashing images of text; unwanted advance by a male-coded character
- Expect a lecture and large group discussion about *THE M00D 0F THE M0MENT*, with attention to mood, modality, miscommunication (including ambiguity), and audiovisual synchronization (or "Mickey Mousing").

Wednesday, September 14th (no class)

- Review Prompt 1. A response is due in Brightspace by Tuesday, September 27th.
- We will not meet today (there's no class).

Friday, September 16th

- Play Marina Kittaka's *Secrets Agent* and complete the worksheet for it (see Brightspace attachment). Ensure the audio is enabled and try to play the game to completion. CW: discussion of body image and voice perception. Check out *Sephonie*, too, if you'd like.
- Expect a lecture and large group discussion about *Secrets Agent*, with attention to mood, modality, spoilers, vulnerability (including intimacy), and parallel play (including vibes and playtesting).

Week 3 (Sept. 20, 21 + 23): Message and Material

This week should consume no more than four hours of your time outside of class.

Tuesday, September 20th

- Watch Amanda Strong and Leanne Betasamosake Simpson's *Biidaaban (The Dawn Comes)* and complete the worksheet on it (see Brightspace attachment). Ensure the audio is enabled. CW: settler colonialism and violence; surveillance; some horror motifs (especially the music)
- Expect a lecture and large group discussion about *Biidaaban*, with attention to message, material, characterization (including environments and "silent" protagonists), infrastructure, and remediation (including hypermediacy, immediacy, and apprehension).

Wednesday, September 21st

- Read Nalo Hopkinson's "Message in a Bottle" (available in Brightspace) and complete the worksheet on it (see Brightspace attachment). CW: racism; sexism; ableism; settler colonialism; gaslighting; sexual content
- Expect a review of key concepts we've discussed thus far.

Friday, September 23rd

- Expect a lecture and large group discussion about "Message in a Bottle," with attention to material (including visceral language), trust (including deferred messages, unknown addressees, and purloined letters), speculation (including conjecture, time travel, and worldbuilding), repatriation, and roles played by the messenger (including curator, guide, conduit, carrier, and trickster).
- Also expect a review of Prompt 1, a response to which is due Tuesday, as well as the "no questions asked," one-week late policy for all submissions in this course.

Please note that Tuesday, September 20th is the last day for 100% reduction of tuition fees for standard first term and full year courses, and Friday, September 23rd is the last day for adding courses that begin in the first term.

Week 4 (Sept. 27, 28 + 30): Making and Modularity

This week should consume no more than five hours of your time outside of class.

Tuesday, September 27th

- Submit your response to Prompt 1 via Brightspace.
- Expect a lecture on the parts or components of contemporary media and fiction, including the notion of modularity.

Wednesday, September 28th

- Spend an hour learning more about a game or interactive fiction, such as Cecile Richard's *Under a Star Called Sun*, mentioned during Tuesday's lecture. Try some internet searches and even playing the game or fiction itself.
- Expect a workshop on the concepts of making and modularity in media.

Friday, September 30th (no class)

- Today is National Day for Truth and Reconciliation (there's no class).

Week 5 (Oct. 4, 5 + 7): Manipulation and Massage

This week should consume no more than three hours of your time outside of class.

Tuesday, October 4th

- Listen to Janina Matthewson and Jeffrey Cranor's *Within the Wires*, Season 1, Episode 1. Complete the worksheet on it (see Brightspace attachment) and feel free to listen to more episodes if you wish. CW: bugs (including bug abuse); themes related to gaslighting, stalking, mental health, and pathologization
- Expect a lecture on ways of listening to audio in fiction, including dialogue (DX), sound effects (SFX), background sound (BG), music (MX), Foley (FOL), and voice-over (VO) as well as causal, semantic, and reduced listening.
- We will return marks for Prompt 1 prior to this class meeting.

Wednesday, October 5th

- Review Prompt 2. A response is due in Brightspace by Tuesday, October 18th.
- Expect a lecture and large group discussion about *Within the Wires*, with attention to manipulation (including propaganda, subliminal messaging, acousmatic voices, and autogenic training), massage (including soundscapes, incidental music, and relaxation tapes), theatre of the imagination, and tape verité.

Friday, October 7th

- Expect a workshop on the concepts of manipulation and massage in media.

Week 6 (Oct. 11, 12 + 14): Movement and Mechanics

This week should consume no more than five hours of your time outside of class.

Tuesday, October 11th

- Play or watch the Fullbright Company's *Gone Home*. Complete the worksheet on it (see Brightspace attachment) and ensure the audio is enabled. You don't need to play the game to completion, but feel free to do so (it takes about 2-3 hours). CW: horror motifs, including implied jumpscares; homophobia and homophobic parents; voyeurism; allusions to child abuse and alcoholism
- Expect a lecture and group discussion about *Gone Home*, with attention to movement (including walking sims, first-person shooters, and being "on rails"), mechanics (including "snooping" and making your own fun), melodrama (external projection of internal states), and ludonarrative dissonance.

Wednesday, October 12th

- Expect a lecture on movement and mechanics in media, including environmental storytelling and evoked, enacted, embedded, and emergent audio. We'll also touch on some games terminology, like verbs, avatars, player characters, NPCs, cameras, gameplay loops, biomes, inventories, levelling, story beats, and DKART (see Richard Terrell).

Friday, October 14th

- Spend an hour learning more about a game or interactive fiction, such as Fellow Traveller's *Citizen Sleeper*, mentioned during Wednesday's lecture. Try some internet searches and even playing the game or fiction itself.
- Expect a review of concepts and techniques for approaching audio in fiction.
- Also expect a review of Prompt 2, a response to which is due Tuesday.

Please note that Monday, October 10th is Thanksgiving Day, and Tuesday, October 11th is the last day for 50% reduction of tuition fees for standard courses.

Week 7 (Oct. 18, 19 + 21): Meta and Minimalism

This week should consume no more than five hours of your time outside of class.

Tuesday, October 18th

- Submit your response to Prompt 2 via Brightspace.
- Expect a lecture on ways of seeing media and fiction, with a focus on images (including optical, graphic, mental, and perceptual images) and comics terminology (like panels, tracks, gutters, captions, spreads, bleed, horizon lines, and speech bubbles).

Wednesday, October 19th

- Read Adrian Tomine's "Translated, From the Japanese" (available in Brightspace) and complete the worksheet on it (see Brightspace attachment). CW: conflict between parents; cisheteropatriarchy; themes of assimilation as well as leaving family and home
- Expect a lecture and large group discussion about "Translated," with attention to meta (including flashbacks and themes of translation), minimalism (including use of lines, colour, brevity, and symmetry), looking (including faces and objects), and sensory education.

Friday, October 21st

- Expect a workshop on how comics tell stories.

Week 8 (Oct. 25, 26 + 28): Memory and Mimesis

This week should consume no more than five hours of your time outside of class.

Tuesday, October 25th

- Read at least the first half of Alison Bechdel's *Fun Home* and complete the worksheet on it (see Brightspace attachment). CW: child abuse; verbal abuse; conflict between parents; domestic violence; homophobia; cisheteropatriarchy; imposition of normative femininity; suicide; death of a parent; sexual content; car accident
- Expect a lecture and large group discussion about *Fun Home*, with attention to memory (including traces, photo albums, memoir, and journals), mimesis (including likeness, mirrors, perspectives, and life imitating art / art imitating life), and narration in the gutters.
- We will return marks for Prompt 2 by this class meeting.

Wednesday, October 26th

- Finish *Fun Home*.
- Expect more discussion of *Fun Home*, with attention to allusion, learning to look, and the art of distance (including the Telemachy).

Friday, October 28th

- Review Prompt 3. A response is due in Brightspace by Friday, November 4th.
- Expect a review of concepts and techniques for approaching images in fiction.

Please note that Monday, October 31st is the last day to withdraw from first term courses without penalty of failure.

Week 9 (Nov. 1, 2 + 4): Meaning and Motivation

This week should consume no more than five hours of your time outside of class.

Tuesday, November 1st

- Play or watch Toby Fox and Temmie Chang's *Undertale* and complete the worksheet on it (see Brightspace attachment). Ensure the audio is enabled. You don't need to play the game to completion (one run may take 4-10 hours, and the game is designed for multiple runs), but feel free to do so. CW: implied torture and child abuse; death of a parent and child; suicide; themes related to depression, anxiety, and violence
- Expect a lecture on interpreting types of text in fiction (such as scripts, symbols, code, instructions, and typefaces), with some examples from *Undertale*.
- Also expect a review of Prompt 3, a response to which is due Friday.

Wednesday, November 2nd

- Expect a workshop on *Undertale*, with attention to meaning (including lore, roleplay, and metafiction), motivation (such as player commitment to multiple runs), minigames (including "bullet hell" and random encounters), nostalgia (including pixelated art, MS Paint, and GameMaker), and toxic cultures in gaming.

Friday, November 4th

- Submit your response to Prompt 3 via Brightspace.
- Expect a review of the course thus far. What have we learned? What didn't we spend enough time on?

Week 10 (Nov. 8, 9 + 11): Buffering . . .

Step away from the course and take a break this week. There's no class on Tuesday, November 8th, and Reading Break is November 10th - 12th.

Please note that Friday, November 11th is Remembrance Day.

Week 11 (Nov. 15, 16 + 18): Markup and Multiple Choice

This week should consume no more than four hours of your time outside of class.

Tuesday, November 15th

- Check out Aaron Reed's *50 Years of Text Games* project, pick a year (between 1971 and 2020), and read about the game for that year. Come to class prepared to talk about it.
- Expect a large group discussion about text games.
- We will return marks for Prompt 3 by this class meeting.

Wednesday, November 16th

- Read (or play?) Porpentine Charity Heartscape and Brenda Neotenomie's *With Those We Love Alive*. Complete the worksheet for it (see Brightspace attachment) and ensure the audio is enabled. Try to read / play it to completion. CW: child abuse; themes related to self-harm, trauma, and structural violence
- Expect a lecture and large group discussion about *WTWLA*, with attention to markup (including HTML and Twine), choice (including lists and rituals), and the labour of survival (including the mechanics of sleeping and hormone application).

Friday, November 18th

- Review the prompt for revisions. You may revise your response to Prompt 1, 2, or 3. This response is optional and is due in Brightspace by Friday, December 2nd.
- Expect a review of concepts and techniques for approaching text in fiction.

Week 12 (Nov. 22, 23 + 25): Mediation and a Mountain

This week should consume no more than four hours of your time outside of class.

Tuesday, November 22nd

- Play or watch Extremely Ok's *Celeste*. Complete the worksheet for it (see Brightspace attachment) and ensure the audio is enabled. You don't need to play it to completion (it takes 8-20 hours). CW: anxiety attacks (including a struggle to breathe); repeated

death of player character; references to alcoholism; death of a parent figure; themes related to mental health and transphobia

- Expect a lecture on interface terminology (such as menus, options, navigation, and HUD) and ways of interpreting interfaces (both diegetic and non-diegetic) in fiction.

Wednesday, November 23rd

- Review Prompt 4. A response is due in Brightspace by Tuesday, December 13th.
- Expect a lecture and large group discussion of *Celeste*, with attention to mediation (including the relationship between interface, engine, and story), difficulty (including mechanics, character experiences, and "assist mode"), the articulation of visual art with music, and, of course, survival and the mountain.

Friday, November 25th

- Expect a lecture on the interfaces we've encountered this term, plus some new ones, too. We'll also discuss the role of action (as input, output, and feedback) in fiction.

Week 13 (Nov. 29 + 30 + Dec. 2): CYOA

This week should consume no more than four hours of your time outside of class.

Tuesday, November 29th

- Bring the title of a game or interactive fiction with an interesting interface to share during class today. Come prepared with a sentence or two explaining why you selected it.
- Expect a large group discussion about the games and interactive fictions you shared.

Wednesday, November 30th

- Expect a review of concepts and techniques for approaching interfaces in fiction.
- Also expect a review of what we learned this term.

Friday, December 2nd

- Optional: Submit your revised response to Prompt 1, 2, or 3.
- Expect a course wrap-up and some time to complete the experience surveys.
- We will return marks for revised responses by Wednesday, December 8th.

Please note that Monday, December 5th is National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women.

Exam Period: Roll Credits

This final assignment should consume no more than five hours of your time.

Tuesday, December 13th

- Submit your response to Prompt 4 via Brightspace.

We wish you a warm, relaxing, and rejuvenating winter break.

Policies

Here are the policies for this course. If anything is unclear, ignorant, or mistaken, then please let us know. We'll correct it.

Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites for this 200-level English course.

Assessment and Feedback

Responses to two prompts are required to pass this course. Failure to complete these two assignments will result in a failing N grade (calculated as a 0 for your GPA).

We will use UVic's official grading system to produce rubrics to assess your work. We will not post marks publicly or outside our offices, and we do not use plagiarism detection software.

All assignments should be submitted via Brightspace. We will also use Brightspace to provide written feedback on each of your responses, regardless of when you submit them. If you ever want additional feedback, then feel free to ask us. We can provide it in person or via email.

Throughout the term, we'll request feedback (verbal and in writing) from you on how the course is going. We'll also ask you to complete Course Experience Surveys at the end of the term (during our last meeting).

Late Submissions and Extensions

We have a "no questions asked" late policy for any assignments (excluding your response to Prompt 4, due in December) submitted within one week (five working days) of the due date. We simply ask that you complete an online form, which we'll circulate during class in September, to apply that policy. Your response to the online form will help us to track work that's arriving a few days late. It'll also save you an email. Of course, we recommend submitting everything on time, but we know that life happens, and for late work we will never expect any sort of documentation from you.

We will deduct two points per working day for every assignment submitted more than one week (five working days) late. Please email me (Jentery) if you need more than a week's extension. Again, we will comment on all assigned work we receive from you during the term, regardless of when it's submitted.

Attendance, Participation, and Recordings

We will assume you are attending each class meeting this term. If you are unable to attend a particular meeting, then please email one of us in advance. You do not need to provide us

with documentation for an absence. There are no participation marks or the like in this course.

With your permission, we may record audio of our class sessions and circulate it via Brightspace. You will have the option to limit personal information shared in the recording. If you have other questions or concerns regarding class recording and privacy, then please contact privacyinfo@uvic.ca.

Communications

The best way to communicate with me (Jentery) is by email (jentery@uvic.ca) or during office hours, which are Thursday, 12:30 - 2:30pm. I respond to email between 9am and 5pm, Monday through Friday, excluding holidays.

Learning Climate

The University of Victoria is committed to promoting, providing, and protecting a positive, supportive, and safe working and learning environment for all its members. We are expected to adhere to UVic's equity and human rights policies and the Trifaculty Code of Professional Behaviour. You should alert us immediately if you have any questions about these policies and their application, or if you have concerns about course proceedings or participants.

Academic Integrity

We are expected to adhere to UVic's academic integrity policy and be aware of the policies for the evaluation of student work. Violations of the integrity policy will result in a failing grade for the given assignment and may additionally result in a failing grade for the course. By taking this course, you agree that all submitted assignments may be subject to an originality review. We do not use software to detect plagiarism in essays or any other assignments.

Copyright

All course materials, including notes, audio recordings, and this course outline, are made available for educational purposes and for the exclusive use of students in this course. The material is protected under copyright law, even if not marked as such. The syllabus itself is licensed CC BY-NC 4.0. Any further use or distribution of materials to others requires written permission, except under fair dealing or another exception in the Copyright Act. Violations may result in disciplinary action under the Resolution of Non-Academic Misconduct Allegations policy (AC1300).

Online Conduct

The University of Victoria is committed to promoting critical academic discourse while providing a respectful and supportive learning environment. All members of the university community have the right to this experience and the responsibility to help create such an

environment. The University will not tolerate racism, sexualized violence, or any form of discrimination, bullying, or harassment.

Please be advised that, by logging into UVic's learning systems and interacting with online resources, you are engaging in a university activity. All interactions within this environment are subject to the university's expectations and policies. Any concerns about student conduct may be reviewed and responded to in accordance with the appropriate university policy. To report concerns about online student conduct, email onlineconduct@uvic.ca.

Accessibility

If you have a disability or health consideration that may require supports, please feel free to approach us and/or the Centre for Accessible Learning (CAL) as soon as possible. CAL staff are available by appointment to assess specific needs, provide referrals, and arrange appropriate supports. We will never ask you to disclose a diagnosis to us, and we know that access needs are social, cultural, and structural issues that aren't always addressed, or adequately addressed, by institutions such as the academy.

Auto-generated transcription and captioning may be enabled in this course. Please be aware that automated transcription and captioning is at best 70-90% accurate and by nature will include errors. This depends on the subject matter, speaker, audio quality, and the like. Words prone to error include specialized terminology and proper names. We ask that you refer to the audio feed for clarification of any errors. If you find transcription or captioning that is offensive, please contact us. If you require captions as part of academic supports, please contact us and/or CAL.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

We aim to create an inclusive learning environment that attends to difference and honours each of you, including your experiences as well as the intersections of race, gender, disability, sexuality, religion, power, and class. We want to be a resource for you, and we are also still learning. If something is said in class (by anyone, including us) that makes you feel uncomfortable, then don't hesitate to talk with us. If you have a name and/or set of pronouns that differ from those that appear in your university records, then let us know and we'll correct the documents provided to us. If your performance in the class is being impeded by your experiences outside of class, then just keep us posted and we'll make adjustments. We also welcome any suggestions to improve the quality of the course and/or its culture and materials, and we will make available mechanisms for anonymous feedback since you may prefer them. If you'd rather speak with someone outside the course, then Luke Carson (chair) and Erin Ellerbeck (undergraduate adviser) in English are excellent resources.

The following student groups may be relevant to your life as a student here at UVic:

- The Native Students Union "is a community group for Indigenous students at UVic. Our space in the SUB is open to self-identifying Indigenous students who want to work, study, lounge, have lunch, or connect with other students. We're also located in the

First Peoples House. Our weekly meetings are an opportunity for students to connect, plan events, share resources, or work on any student-led initiatives on student wellness, culture, Indigenous resurgence, and decolonization."

- The Students of Colour Collective "is a group of self-identified Black, Indigenous and/or Persons of colour operating as an advocacy group out of the University of Victoria, located on Lekwungen Homelands. We are committed to cultural awareness, mental health, anti-racism, and social justice. SOCC welcomes and encourages all students who self identify as Black, Indigenous and/or Persons of colour at UVic to become active members."
- The Society for Students with a Disability (SSD) "is a student advocacy group that promotes the full participation and inclusion of students identified with disabilities at the University of Victoria. The SSD provides a welcoming, safe, and supportive environment for all students identified with disabilities. The SSD advocates for individual accommodation and systemic changes to the University that will make post-secondary education more accessible and socially just."
- The Gender Empowerment Centre (GEM) "is a collectively run, drop-in space on campus that provides resources through an intersectional feminist framework. GEM offers free access to a large variety of safer sex supplies, menstrual supplies (including FREE menstrual cups) pregnancy tests and emergency contraceptives. They provide health resources, peer support, as well as a lounge space to hang out, study, and meet others."
- UVic Pride "is an organization for all people who are queer, queer-positive, gender-variant and/or intersex. We strive to meet the needs of people who self-identify as queer (including but not limited to people who identify as Two Spirit, bisexual, lesbian, gay, asexual, demisexual, aromantic, and pansexual, as well as people who do not identify with these labels); trans people; those who are questioning their sexuality or gender; those who are struggling with concerns related to intersexuality; and supportive partners, friends, family members, and allies."

Language for this policy was drawn from the Harriet W. Sheridan Center for Teaching and Learning at Brown University, and from the work of Monica Linden, in particular.

Basic Needs

We want you to thrive in this course and everywhere else. Please let us know as early as possible if you have any concerns or if you require any supports to succeed. We'll do our best to help. If, for instance, you need to cover gaps in care, then please don't hesitate to bring your children to class meetings. Babies who are nursing are always welcome, as we do not want you to choose between feeding your child and continuing your education.

UVic takes student mental health very seriously, with a website full of resources. They offer services such as assistance and referral to address students' personal, social, career, and study skills concerns. Services for students also include crisis and emergency mental health consultation and confidential assessment, counselling services (individual and small group), and referrals. Many of these programs are connected with Health Services, which you may contact by phone.

The Student Services website lists several policies that you might want to know about and may make your life at UVic safer and easier. Only some of them are directly related to this course, but they're still important.

Language for this policy was drawn from the work of Richard Pickard at UVic.

Territory Acknowledgement

As researchers and instructors at the University of Victoria, we acknowledge and respect the lək̓ʷəŋən peoples on whose traditional territory the University stands, and the Songhees, Esquimalt, and WSÁNEĆ peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.

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