Course Instructors

Anne Godlewska

Email: anne.godlewska@queensu.ca

Office

MacCorry D329

Contact Time

3 hrs/wk

Format

Seminar

Class Assessment

book reviews 60%; leading 1-3 seminars 12%; participation 8%; one short story 18%

COURSE OVERVIEW

We will read, discuss and conduct research and writing around 4 major novels or fictional works with powerful geographic themes. These may include works by George Eliot, John Steinbeck, Joseph Boyden, J.R.R. Tolkien, Kenneth Grahame, Ursula LeGuin, Marilynn Robinson, V.S. Naipaul, Rohinton Mistry, or Kazuo Ishiguro. The geographic themes we will explore include:

- Using fiction to teach and engage students
- World building from the village to the cosmos
- Imagining better worlds
- Literature as social critique
- Portraits of place and time
- Seeing through other epistemologies
- Escaping this world by building others
- Travelling as metaphor
- From place rich to placelessness
- The world formed by colonialism
- Maps and metaphors

We will place these works in the context of their time and place and of academic writing, especially by geographers. Students will undertake a short story integrating key geographic themes and that draws insight or guidance from academic geographical writing.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will:

- identify integrative geographic themes in human geography
- read and understand academic writing by geographers related to the works of fiction or to the environments they describe
- discern the power and limitations of geography in some of the masterpieces of literature in English
- integrate geography and fictional composition in their own creative writing

COURSE TOPICS

Geography, literature and historical geography

COURSE READINGS

4 novels and writing by geographers and non-geographers about the geographic dimensions of the work.