



Indigenous Studies 2A03: Introduction to Indigenous Peoples Spirituality
McMaster University
Winter 2021

Instructor: Dawn Martin-Hill, Anthropology & Indigenous Studies

Email : dawnm@mcmaster.ca

The objective of the course is to provide students with an overview of the current literature and issues related to Indigenous people's spirituality. Developing an Indigenous discourse and framework includes understanding the core values Indigenous people hold in common and the diversity of their belief systems. The central world views of Indigenous people are nested in creation stories - origins. Indigenous Knowledge and ways of knowing flow from the oral stories, songs, ceremonies, ritualized knowledge, values and ideology and is transmitted from one generation to the next generation. The conflicts with settler society are often embedded in Indigenous people's connection to their lands and displacement from their ancestral sites. The critical analysis of western religion's assumptions about Indigenous people's spiritual traditions and practices are explored as related to the cultural "genocidal" practices of the western policy. The continued problems that arise from non-Indigenous representations of Indigenous people's spirituality through a lens of prejudice has resulted in outlawing the religious freedoms through the Indian Act. The recent lifting of "ceremonial bans" in Canada and the U.S. has had long lasting effects on Indigenous spiritual practices and gender roles (two-spirit), children, and cultural property rights, starting with Doctrine of Discovery.

The course will also focus on the religious practices from Haudenosaunee, and Lakota while exploring Cree, Anishnabe and Hopi. The critical roles that spirituality informed and shaped in politics, economics, social organization and health was diminished but continues to inform current land decisions and social issues. In addition, there will be an emphasis on the development of a research project examining issues related to the contemporary realities of Indigenous people's spirituality and religious freedom. Research will explore a holistic well-being (mental/physical/ spiritual/emotional) from an Indigenous Knowledge framework. Current issues of pipelines, land reclamation, suicide epidemics, resistance and resilience are thoroughly discussed through social media, Indigenous films, guest speakers and seminar presentations. In addition, open class discussion will be encouraged as a means of sharing thoughts and ideas on issues of understanding the spiritual human experience and condition. The TRC call to action truth and reconciliation and MMIW, 2019 will inform the Canadian position on current policies and historical injustices.



Reading are drawn from on-line sources, including “non-academic” Indigenous websites, storytelling and song.

Basic call to consciousness: https://ratical.org/many_worlds/6Nations/6nations3.html#part3

Spoken word: Indigenous ways of knowing: Oren Lyons: On The Indigenous View of the World
Recorded 2006: Interview conducted by Leila Conners for The 11th Hour Research Tapes
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z7L7c8zaWSQ>
https://ratical.org/many_worlds/6Nations/OrenLyons-IndigenousWorldView.html

Wade Davis Schooling the world <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hwk2w-9aekA>

Wade Davis: Cultures at the far edge of the world: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bL7vK0pOvKI>

The Unraveling of America, Wade Davis

<https://www.rollingstone.com/politics/political-commentary/covid-19-end-of-american-era-wade-davis-1038206/>

[The Doctrine of Discovery: Unmasking the Domination Code](https://vimeo.com/ondemand/dominationcode)

<https://vimeo.com/ondemand/dominationcode>

Skä•noñh - Great Law of Peace Center - Thanksgiving Address

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5uDMS-5JeEo&list=PLg61TTPSzoLIQuegMIdnV-Saru6QRJXy>

The Great Law - The White Roots of Peace - The Dish With One Spoon Documentary, Dawn Martin Hill

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NVcuO9uwJ3E&t=2107s>

[Annita Hetoevéhotokhe'e Lucchesi, Spirit-Based Research: A Tactic for Surviving Trauma in Decolonizing Research, MMIW Special Issue, Journal of Indigenous research](https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/kicijr/vol7/iss1/4/)

<https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/kicijr/vol7/iss1/4/>

Tasunke Witko (Crazy Horse): A Documentary Film

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qnRzS_voHus

COLORES | Hopi Prophecy | New Mexico PBS

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p1m0nLSOHi4>

JOURNAL ARTICLES:

1) Freedom, Law, and Prophecy: A Brief History of Native American Religious Resistance

Lee Irwin *American Indian Quarterly*

Vol. 21, No. 1, Special Issue: To Hear the Eagles Cry: Contemporary Themes in Native American Spirituality: Part III: Historical Reflections (Winter, 1997), pp. 35-55 (21 pages)



- 3) Jack D. "Indigenous Americans: Spirituality and Ecos." *Daedalus*, vol. 130, no. 4, 2001, pp. 283–300. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/20027728.
- 4) Similarities and Differences Between Yoruba Traditional Healers (YTH) and Native American and Canadian Healers (NACH). *Journal of Religion and Health*, 55(5), 1717-1728. Retrieved December 15, 2020, from <http://www.jstor.org.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/stable/24735455>
- Stote, K. (2012b). The coercive sterilization of Aboriginal women in Canada. *American Indian Culture and Research Journal*, 36(3), 117-150. Retrieved from: http://www.fqpn.qc.ca/main/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/AICRJ_STOTE-STERILIZATION.pdf

Cultural Continuity as a Protective Factor Against Suicide in First Nations Youth, Michael J. Chandler & Christopher E. Lalonde
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/239921354_Cultural_Continuity_as_a_Protective_Factor_Against_Suicide_in_First_Nations_Youth

[King \(2007\) - The Value of Water and the Meaning of Water Law \(1\).pdf](#)
[‘Polishing the Kaswentha’: a Haudenosaunee view of environmental cooperation - ScienceDirect \(doi.org\)](#)

- 1) Journal of Aboriginal Health-Communities in Crisis (www.naho.ca)

Suggested Reading: ISP Library

Rice, Brian. **The Rotinonshoni; A Traditional Iroquoian History Through The Eyes of Teharonhia:wako and Sawiskera**. Syracuse University Press, 2013

Evaluation:

Mid-term Exam (In Class)	30%
Research Essay	25%
Presentation	15%
Final Exam	30%

Jan 11

Week 1: Indigenous Knowledge: Spoken Word Pedagogy

Skä•noñh - Great Law of Peace Center - Thanksgiving Address

Watch: Wade Davis Schooling the world

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hwk2w-9aekA>



video: The Doctrine of Discovery: Unmasking the Domination Code

<https://vimeo.com/ondemand/dominationcode>

Jan 18

Week 2: Haudenosaunee – First Environments

Reading: Native American Spirituality: Part III: Historical Reflections (Winter, 1997), pp. 35-55 (21 pages)

video - Oren Lyons: On The Indigenous View of the World

Recorded 2006: Interview conducted by Leila Conners for The 11th Hour Research Tapes

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z7L7c8zaWSQ>

https://ratical.org/many_worlds/6Nations/OrenLyons-IndigenousWorldView.html

Jan 25

Week 3: Spirituality, law and prophecy

Little Bear Leroy, Matthew Wildcat, Mandee McDonald Dechinta Bush, Glen Coulthard Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society Vol. 3, No. 3, 2014, pp. X-IV
<https://jps.library.utoronto.ca/index.php/des/article/view/22248/18062>

COLORES | Hopi Prophecy | New Mexico PBS

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p1m0nLSOHi4>

The Dish With One Spoon Documentary

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NVcuO9uwJ3E&t=2107sJ>

Feb 1

Week 4: Discourse of Haudenosaunee Spirituality

Community Wellness Freedom, Law, and Prophecy: A Brief History of Native American Religious Resistance, Lee Irwin *American Indian*

Feb 8

Week 5: Creation shaping values, worldview and reality

I See You - A Story from the Haudenosaunee Simone Anter J.D. Columbia

Riverkeeper, *Journal*: Vol. 6 : Iss. 2 , Article 1

Jack D. "Indigenous Americans: Spirituality and Ecos." *Daedalus*, vol. 130, no. 4, 2001, pp. 283–300. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/20027728.

Feb 15

Week 6: READING WEEK

Feb 22

Week 7: White Buffalo Calf Pipe & Seven Sacred Rites

Arvol Looking Horse: One Prayer

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=llVm4F84PpE&list=PLbtg4g5JDxjroanYXH9D6xHCFnJQbirx>

Recommended Reading: The Sacred Pipe, Epps Brown

MID-TERM EXAM



March 1

Week 8: The Sacred – ceremony and Healing spaces

Black Hills, Paha Sapa

2) Similarities and Differences Between Yoruba Traditional Healers (YTH) and Native American and Canadian Healers (NACH). *Journal of Religion and Health*, 55(5), 1717-1728.

Retrieved December 15, 2020, from

<http://www.jstor.org.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/stable/24735455>

Quarterly Journal of Aboriginal Health-Communities in Crisis (www.naho.ca)

March 8

Week 9: Gender resilience the future

Stote, K. (2012b). The coercive sterilization of Aboriginal women in Canada.

American Indian Culture and Research Journal, 36(3), 117-150. Retrieved from:

http://www.fqpn.qc.ca/main/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/AICRJ_STOTE-STERILIZATION.pdf

March 15

Week 10: Presentations/ RESEARCH PAPER DUE

March 22

Week 11: Presentations

March 29

Week 12: Presentations

April 5 Week 13: Exam Review

Submit essay exam

About half of this course content ***is based on oral transmission of knowledge***, through the spoken word and film. This class utilizes Indigenous pedagogy of the spoken word – therefore attendance is required to learn from the oral tradition which is as ‘primary source’ as is the required reading which has been reduced due to Covid adjustments.

The mid-term is multiple choice and will be on-line.

The research paper is 6 double spaced pages, topics and resources will be provided in class.

The presentation of the research paper is in power point or digital and 10 minutes and you have 8-10 minutes to present.

An essay final exam will cover the entire course and proper protocol will be observed, essay style 6 pages submitted on-line.



Grades

Grades will be based on the McMaster University grading scale:

MARK	GRADE
90-100	A+
85-90	A
80-84	A-
77-79	B+
73-76	B
70-72	B-
67-69	C+
63-66	C
60-62	C-
57-59	D+
53-56	D
50-52	D-
0-49	F

University Policies

Academic Integrity Statement

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behavior in all aspects of the learning process.

Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity.

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behavior can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, located at

www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity.

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which credit has been obtained.
2. Improper collaboration in group work.
3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities

Students who require academic accommodation must contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. Academic accommodations must be arranged for each term of study. Student Accessibility Services can be contacted by phone 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or e-



mail sas@mcmaster.ca. For further information, consult McMaster University's Policy for [Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](#).

Faculty of Social Sciences E-mail Communication Policy

Effective September 1, 2010, it is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student's own McMaster University e-mail account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion.

Course Modification

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check his/her McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.