

INTRODUCTION TO INDIGENOUS STUDIES 1A03

Fall 2021

Instructor: Dr. Kaitlin Debicki

Email: debickks@mcmaster.ca

Lecture: Thursday 11:30-1:20pm

Room: Emergency Virtual Classroom

Virtual Office Hours: Tuesday 1:30-2:20pm

Course Description

This course is an introduction to the histories, societies and politics of First Nation, Metis, and Inuit peoples in Canada. Students will examine some of the distinctive features of Indigenous worldviews and the history of their relationship with European settler societies. Topics relevant to this approach will include: discussions of the pre-contact era in North America, initial encounters with the newcomers, colonial wars, treaties, legislative policy, Indigenous activism, and issues of justice.

Format: Synchronous, 80-minute lectures will occur on Thursdays, and 50-minute pre-recorded materials (podcasts, interviews, guest lectures, etc.) will be posted to Avenue on Tuesdays for students to review independently.

Course Objectives

The goal of this course is for students to gain an understanding of several selected themes in Indigenous Studies while contextualizing them within the different perspectives of Indigenous peoples and nations. Students will gain a greater understanding of Indigenous-non-Indigenous relations while developing their own interpretive reading and writing skills through the course assignments. Furthermore, students will be introduced to and gain a greater understanding of Indigenous oral histories, worldviews, and perspectives.

Required Materials and Texts

- Vowel, Chelsea, *Indigenous Writes: A Guide to First Nations, Métis, & Inuit Issues in Canada* (Winnipeg: Highwater Press, 2016).
- *Indigenous Writes* is available for purchase at King West Books (Westdale, Hamilton, ON):
https://kingwestbooks.com/?q=h.tvviewer&using_sb=status&qsb=keyword&qse=9x0pp9vO_Q5OVcSA4Q8A6Q
- It is also available online through Mills Library:
https://discovery.mcmaster.ca/iii/encore/record/C_Rb4411718_Sindigenous%20writes_Orightresult_U_X7?lang=eng&suite=def
- Used copies of the book can also be found online at abebooks.ca or amazon.ca.

- Additional weekly readings will be available online through Avenue to Learn.

Course Evaluation – Overview

Essay 1 (diagnostic), 300-500 words, due Sept. 23:	10%
Reading journal:	20%
Treaty Exercise (Audio Recording): Oct. 28 th	20%
Essay 2 (close reading), 1000 words, due Nov. 11	25%
Final Exam:	25%

Course Evaluation – Details

Diagnostic Essay (10%), Due: September 23rd

The first, short essay, worth 10% of the final grade, is “diagnostic,” which means it is an opportunity for your TA to get a sense of your formal, critical writing—both its strengths and areas for improvement. It is also an opportunity for you and your TA to communicate about the kind of writing expected in Essay 2 and how it will be assessed. Prompts and more detailed instructions for both essays will be provided once the course begins.

Reading Journal (20%), Due: December 7th (at the latest)

Reading journals, worth 20% of the final grade, are an opportunity for you to cultivate a writing practice as part of your sustained engagement with literary texts throughout the course. They will be marked by your TA for completion only, not “quality” or grammatical correctness. This means that the writing in these journals can be free and informal—the priority is to learn to think with your hand about the texts you are reading, and to cultivate a critical language in your own voice. This also means that you have a lot of freedom to decide what kind of journal you want to keep: handwriting, perhaps with some sketching or drawing, in a paper notebook; typing up Word files; using a stylus with a tablet notes program; keeping a blog—the format is up to you.

What we ask is that you write entries of at least half a page (or around 250 words) in response to at least 5 assigned texts over the course of the semester. You might copy some of your favorite lines and brainstorm close readings of them; you might make a connection between the text and another text, either from the syllabus or from elsewhere; you might draft an answer to or adaptation of the piece; you might describe your experience of reading this text, and how it helps you think about something. As long as the entry makes it clear which text you are engaging, the kind of engagement is up to you.

To submit journal entries, take a picture or screencap of each entry and submit it to your TA via MS Teams. You may submit them any time throughout the course up until December 7th, when all 5 entries are due. Each completed entry is worth 4% of the final

grade. You are welcome to write as many journal entries as you want, but you only need to submit 5 for full credit (20% of the final grade).

Treaty Exercise (Audio Recording) (20%), Due: October 28th

Where are you from? Where do you know from? Where do you belong and where claims you? Please research the place that you call home and find out what treaties or land claims apply to that place. What is the treaty called? Who were the people who made the treaty, what were its terms? How have those terms been violated or upheld? What was the place called before it was given a European name? What are your personal responsibilities to that treaty? Please make a 5-10 minute audio file recording your response.

Essay 2 (25%), Due: November 11th

The second essay, worth 25% of the final grade, is an opportunity for you to synthesize some of the critical reading and writing skills you will develop throughout the course to perform a close reading of particular texts from the syllabus to make an argument. Prompts and more detailed instructions for both essays will be provided once the course begins.

Final Exam (25%), Due: December 21st

The final exam will be an asynchronous prompt to write a short reflection on the course's "big questions" and what you will take away from this learning experience. These exams will be marked by Dr. Debicki and the TAs, and will be assessed according to the quality of intellectual engagement—that is, how earnestly and insightfully you consider the questions posed and demonstrate what you have learned—rather than on formal elements such as grammar and punctuation, paragraph structure, etc. In other words, you are not expected to draft, revise, and polish the exam as you would with a formal essay. You may refer to course notes, readings, and other materials, but you are not expected to research or cite outside sources—we are looking for a sense of what you have learned, how you are thinking through the course's main questions, and how you think with and about the literary texts we have read together. Prompts will be distributed in Week 12 and exams may be submitted in MS Teams any time up to 11:59pm Tuesday December 21st.

Weekly Course Schedule and Required Readings

September 7 & 9: Vocabularies & Groundings

Indigenous Writes: "Chapter 1: Just Don't Call Us Late for Supper" & "Chapter 2: Settling on a Name" [16 pages]

September 16: Beginnings: Cosmologies

Creation Story Companion - Conversations in Cultural Fluency #1
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-DrKu736Kj4> (29:40 minutes)

Basil Johnston. "The Vision of Kitche Manitou." *Ojibway Heritage*.

Williamson, P. "The Mohawk Creation Story." *An Anthology of Canadian Native Literature in English*.

September 23: Myths and Stereotypes

"Challenging media stereotypes of Indigenous people" Listen to CBC's Unreserved episode here: <https://www.cbc.ca/radio/unreserved/challenging-media-stereotypes-of-indigenous-people-1.5358798>

Indigenous Writes: Part 3 "Myth Busting" [51 pages]

September 30: Doctrine of Discovery & European Diffusionism

Indigenous Writes: "Chapter 26: Rights? What Rights?" [8 pages]

Marie Battiste & James Sakej Henderson. "Chapter 1: Eurocentrism and the European Ethnographic Tradition." *Protecting Indigenous Knowledge and Heritage: A Global Challenge*.

October 7: Settler Colonialism

Patrick Wolfe. "Settler colonialism and the elimination of the native." *Journal of Genocide Research* 8:4 (2006): 387-409. [22 pages]

October 12 & 14: Reading Week

October 21: Pillars of White Supremacy

A. Smith. "Chapter 4: Indigeneity, Settler Colonialism, White Supremacy." *Racial Formation in the 21st Century*. [18 pages]

Tiffany Lethabo King. "New World Grammars: The 'Unthought' Black Discourses of Conquest." *Otherwise Worlds: Against Settler Colonialism and Anti-Blackness*. [17 pages]

October 28: Treaties

Trick or Treaty: https://www.nfb.ca/film/trick_or_treaty/ (**Watch:** 00:00 to 50:06 minutes)

Indigenous Writes: "Chapter 27: Treaty Talk" & "Chapter 28: The More Things Change, the More They Stay the Same" [17 pages]

November 4: Treaties Continued

Treaty Relations and Two Row Companion - Conversations in Cultural Fluency #5
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OwTljDzodi4> (36 minutes)

Daniel Coleman & Rick Hill Sr. "The Two Row Wampum-Covenant Chain Tradition as a Guide for Indigenous-University Research Partnerships." *Cultural Studies Critical Methodologies* 19.5 (2018): 339-359. [20 pages]

November 11: The Indian Act & FNMI

The Indian Act Explained, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OhBrq7Ez-rQ> (25:35 minutes)

Indigenous Writes: "Chapter 3: Got Status?" "Chapter 4: You're Métis? Which of Your Parents Is an Indian?" "Chapter 5: Feel the Inukness" "Chapter 8: Caught in the Crossfire of Blood-Quantum Reasoning" [42 pages]

November 18: Residential Schooling & The Sixties and Millennial Scoops

Federal Government Apology on Residential Schools,
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xCpn1erz1y8> (8:29)

Indigenous Writes: "Chapter 20: Monster" & "Chapter 21: Our Stolen Generations" [20 pages]

November 25: Activism & Social Justice

Sewatokwa'tshera't: The Dish with One Spoon,
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NVCuO9uwJ3E> (Watch, 00:00 – 49:00)

Barker, A. J., & Ross, R. M. (2017). Reoccupation and resurgence: Indigenous protest camps in Canada. *Protest Camps in International Context: Spaces, Infrastructures and Media of Resistance*, 199-220. [21 pages]

Dec 2: Indigenous Futures

Lindsay Nixon. "Chapter 18: Visual Cultures of Indigenous Futurism." *Otherwise Worlds: Against Settler Colonialism and Anti-Blackness*. [11 pages]

Erica Violet Lee. "Reconciling in the Apocalypse." *The Monitor*. March/April 2016.
<https://www.policyalternatives.ca/publications/monitor/reconciling-apocalypse>

Kai Minosh Pyle. "How to Survive the Apocalypse for Native Girls." *Love After the End: An Anthology of Two-Spirit & Indigiqueer Speculative Fiction*. [18 pages]

December 7: Final Exam Review

Course Policies

Netiquette

This course contains several opportunities for virtual discussion-based engagement. It is essential that respectful and appropriate discussions take place in order for all students to have opportunities to learn and express their views. Please review McMaster's *Netiquette* policy here: <https://sscm.mcmaster.ca/the-code/netiquette/>

Submission of Assignments

Please see instructions for individual assignments listed on Avenue to Learn as submission requirements may vary.

Late Assignments

Late assignments will be subject to a 3% per day late penalty (includes weekends and holidays) for up to seven (7) days. After this date, no assignments will be accepted and a grade of zero (0) will be applied. Extensions for course work must be approved by the instructor before the due date (see Academic Regulations), and will be granted for illness or emergencies only.

Avenue to Learn

In this course we will be using Avenue to Learn. Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of this course, private information such as first and last names, usernames for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in this course will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

University Policies

Academic Integrity Statement

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour 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 behaviour 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](#).

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty

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

Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who require academic accommodation must contact [Student Accessibility Services](#) (SAS) at 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or sas@mcmaster.ca to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. For further information, consult McMaster University's [Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](#) policy.

Academic Accommodation for Religious, Indigenous or Spiritual Observances (RISO)

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the RISO policy. Students requiring a [RISO](#) accommodation should submit their request to their Faculty Office normally within 10 working days of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation or to the Registrar's Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.

Conduct Expectations

As a McMaster student, you have the right to experience, and the responsibility to demonstrate, respectful and dignified interactions within all of our living, learning and working communities. These expectations are described in the [Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities](#) (the "Code"). All students share the responsibility of maintaining a positive environment for the academic and personal growth of all McMaster community members, whether in person or online.

It is essential that students be mindful of their interactions online, as the Code remains in effect in virtual learning environments. The Code applies to any interactions that adversely affect, disrupt, or interfere with reasonable participation in University activities. Student disruptions or behaviours that interfere with university functions on online platforms (e.g. use of Avenue 2 Learn, WebEx or Zoom for delivery), will be taken very seriously and will be investigated. Outcomes may include restriction or removal of the involved students' access to these platforms.

Copyright and Recording

Students are advised that lectures, demonstrations, performances, and any other course material provided by an instructor include copyright protected works. The Copyright Act and copyright law protect every original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic work, **including lectures** by University instructors

The recording of lectures, tutorials, or other methods of instruction may occur during a course. Recording may be done by either the instructor for the purpose of authorized distribution, or by a student for the purpose of personal study. Students should be aware that their voice and/or image may be recorded by others during the class. Please speak with the instructor if this is a concern for you.

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.

Extreme Circumstances

The University reserves the right to change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances (e.g., severe weather, labour disruptions, etc.). Changes will be communicated through regular McMaster communication channels, such as McMaster Daily News, A2L and/or McMaster email.

Grades

Grades will be based on the McMaster University grading scale:

MARK	GRADE
90-100	A+
85-89	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