

INTRODUCTION TO INDIGENOUS STUDIES Fall 2020

Instructor: Dr. Vanessa Watts

Email: wattsv@mcmaster.ca

Lecture: Weekly

Room: Online

Office Hours: Tuesdays 12:30-2:00pm,

Join via Zoom:

<https://mcmaster.zoom.us/j/9974788668>

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Teaching Assistants:

Shyla Anderson:

anders15@mcmaster.ca

Luc Gambacort:

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Olivia Parker:

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Vivian Sim:

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Office Hours: Teaching Assistants

Shyla Anderson: by appointment (please email)

Luc Gambacort: Tuesdays, 11:00am – 12:00pm

Olivia Parker: Mondays, 12:30pm – 2:00pm via Zoom:

<https://mcmaster.zoom.us/j/96018330629>

Vivian Sim: by appointment, Mondays and Wednesdays (please email)

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. Pre-recorded lectures will be posted to Avenue.

Lectures: Online format (also known as asynchronous). This means that all the video lectures have been recorded in advance and can be viewed on your own schedule (within the deadlines set out in the syllabus) on Avenue to Learn.

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

- Thomas King, *The Inconvenient Indian* (Toronto: Anchor Canada, 2013)
The Inconvenient Indian will be available for purchase at the bookstore by October or can be found in the library on three-hour reserve. Used copies of the book can also be found online at abebooks.ca or amazon.ca.
- Weekly readings will be available online through Avenue to Learn

Class Format

This course is being offered in online (also known as asynchronous) format. This means that all the video lectures have been recorded in advance and can be viewed on your own schedule (within the deadlines set out in the syllabus). Lectures will be posted on Mondays. This course has no tutorials, but does have group discussion elements.

Course Evaluation – Overview

- Midterm test (online) – 25%, October 19th – October 23rd
- Critical Reflection of Article – 15%, October 30th
- Reading Group Meeting Discussions – 10%, Weekly
- Critical Reflection of a Book – 25%, December 9th
- Final Examination (online) – 25%, Exam Period

Course Evaluation – Details

Midterm test (25%), October 19TH – 23rd

The midterm test is worth 25% of your total course grade and contains 25 multiple choice questions. The test will be completed online using the Avenue to Learn “Quizzes” tool. Multiple choice questions will be based on readings (**excluding Thomas King’s, *The Inconvenient Indian***), lecture slides and films. It will be made available for a specific, time-limited period, as indicated in the **Detailed Course Schedule**. You *must* access and complete the test during this designated period.

Critical Reflection of Article (15%), Due: Friday, October 30th

You will select one (1) of the readings from the course (**excluding** Thomas King's, *The Inconvenient Indian*), and read through it carefully. Then, write a critical reflection of approximately 750 words in length, according to the instructions posted to Avenue to Learn. This assignment is graded out of 100 and is evaluated using a rubric. The rubric for this assignment can be found on A2L

Reading Group Meeting Discussions (10%), Weekly

As outlined in the Weekly Course Schedule below, you will share your reflections on the assigned chapter from Thomas King's, *The Inconvenient Indian* in your assigned Reading Group on Avenue to Learn. There are a total of ten reading group meetings throughout the term. There is no limit to word count/length of your general reflections, but you should aim for at least 100 words (or about the length of this paragraph you are reading). You can either initiate your own thread or respond to one your group member's thread with your response/reflection. Weekly discussions will be monitored by the instructor and teaching assistants. Please see Avenue to Learn for a guide to participating in respectful online discussion.

Critical Reflection of a Book (25%), Due: December 9th

Each student will submit a critical reflection of the text, *The Inconvenient Indian*. This review should be 5-6 pages in length, according to the instructions posted to Avenue to Learn. This assignment is graded out of 100 and is evaluated using a rubric. The rubric for this assignment can be found on A2L

Final Examination (25%), Exam Period (TBD)

The final examination is worth 25% of your total course grade and contains 25 multiple choice questions. The test will be completed online using the Avenue to Learn "Quizzes" tool. Multiple choice questions will be based on readings (**excluding** Thomas King's, *The Inconvenient Indian*), lecture slides and films. It will be made available for a specific, time-limited period, as indicated on A2L. You *must* access and complete the test during this designated period.

Weekly Course Schedule and Required Readings

Week 1 (September 8th – 13th), Introduction to Course

Lecture: *Introduction to Course*

Film: *Hodinohs:ni Governance & the Great Law of Peace*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0DaNMtVANSa> (39:39 minutes)

Readings:

- "Oral Tradition and Traditional Knowledge". Fixico, D.L. *The American Indian Mind in a Linear World: American Indian Studies and Traditional Knowledge* 2006

Week 2 (September 14th – 20th), Contact and Wampum

Lecture: *The “New World” and First Agreements*

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

Readings:

- “Rights? What Rights?”, *Indigenous Writes: A Guide to First Nations, Metis & Inuit Issues in Canada*. Vowel, C.
- “Treaty Talk”, *Indigenous Writes: A Guide to First Nations, Metis & Inuit Issues in Canada*. Vowel, C.

Week 3 (September 21st – 27th), Unpacking Myths & Stereotypes

Lecture: *Myths & Stereotypes*

Film: “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>

Readings:

- “Myth-Busting”, *Indigenous Writes: A Guide to First Nations, Metis & Inuit Issues in Canada*. Vowel, C.

Group Meeting & Discussion #1: Read Prologue & Chapter 1, “Forget Columbus”

Week 4 (September 28th – October 4th), Métis and the Fur Trade

Lecture: *The Emergence of the Métis*

Film: *The Other Side of the Ledger:* https://www.nfb.ca/film/other_side_of_the_ledger/ (42 minutes)

Readings:

- “Subjugation of the Indians and Métis” Howard Adams. *Prison of Grass*.

Group Meeting & Discussion #2: Read: Chapter 2, “The End of the Trail”

Week 5 (October 5th – 11th), The Treaties

Lecture: *Historic Treaty-Making in Canada*

Midterm Review (lecture format)

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

Readings:

- “Treaty-Making Precedents and Progress”, St. Germain, J. *Indian Treaty-Making Policy in the United States and Canada*, © 2000 University of Toronto Press

Group Meeting & Discussion #3: *Read:* Chapter 3, “Too Heavy to Lift”

Week 6 (October 12th – 18th)

Reading Week (no course content scheduled)

Week 7 (October 19th – 25th) Mid-term Test

Mid-term Test

Week 8 (October 26th – November 1st), The Haudenosaunee & the Anishinaabe

Lecture: *Creation Stories (Guest Lecture)*

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

Readings:

- “The Vision of Kitche Manitou”. Basil Johnston. *Ojibway Heritage*.
- “The Mohawk Creation Story.” Williamson, P. *An Anthology of Canadian Native Literature in English*. 2006

Group Meeting & Discussion #4: *Read:* Chapter 4, “One Name to Rule Them All”

- **Note:** Critical Reflection of Article is due (October 30th)

Week 9 (November 2nd – 8th), Indian Policy in Canada

Lecture: *Indian Policy in Canada*

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

Readings:

- "The Indian Act". RCAP. Indian Affairs.

Group Meeting & Discussion #5: Read: Chapter 5, "We Are Sorry"

Week 10 (November 9th – 15th), The Indian Residential School System

Lecture: *The Indian Residential School System in Canada*

Film: *Stolen Children*, <https://curio.ca/en/video/stolen-children-1044/> (48:24)

***This film contains descriptions of physical and sexual violence. You are not required to watch this film for the purposes of this course. There are no course assignments (e.g. midterm or final exam) associated with the content of this film. If you choose to watch the film and require supports, you can contact Brittany Vincze, Counsellor, Indigenous Student Services: vinczeb@mcmaster.ca ***

Readings:

- "Laying the groundwork for the residential school system", *Canada's Residential School: The History, Part I*. The Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015.

Group Meeting & Discussion #6: Read: Chapter 6, "Like Cowboys and Indians"

Week 11 (November 16th – 22nd), Virtual Fieldtrip

To be announced

Group Meeting & Discussion #7: Read: Chapter 7, "Forget About It"

Week 12 (November 23rd – 29th), Gender and Colonialism

Lecture: *Gender and Colonialism*

Film:

Readings:

- "Dismantling of Gender Equity." Kim Anderson. Recognition of Being.

Group Meeting & Discussion #8: Read: Chapter 8, “What Indians Want”

Week 13 (November 30th – December 6th), Resistance

Lecture: *Resistance through a Local Lens*

Film: *Sewatokwa'tshera't: The Dish with One Spoon*,

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NVCuO9uwJ3E> (Watch, 00:00 – 49:00)

Readings:

- 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.

Group Meeting & Discussion #9: Read: Chapter 9, “As Long as the Grass is Green”

Week 14 (December 7th – 9th), Final Exam Review

Lecture: Final Exam Review

Group Meeting & Discussion #10: Read: Chapter 10, “Happy Ever After”

- **Note:** Critical Reflection of a Book due – 25%, December 9th

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 5% 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. Students may be asked to submit supporting documentation for an extension request.

Absences, Missed Work, Illness

In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Academic Regulation in the Undergraduate Calendar “Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work”.

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.

Turnitin.com

In this course we will be using a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal authenticity and ownership of student submitted work. Students will be expected to submit their work electronically either directly to Turnitin.com or via Avenue to Learn (A2L) plagiarism detection (a service supported by Turnitin.com) so it can be checked for academic dishonesty. Students who do not wish to submit their work through A2L and/or Turnitin.com must still submit an electronic and/or hardcopy to the instructor. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to Turnitin.com or A2L. All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld (e.g., on-line search, other software, etc.). For more information please refer to the [Turnitin.com Policy](#).

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

