



McMaster University School of Social Work
Social Work and Indigenous Peoples 4I03

Wednesdays, September 8 to December 8, 2015, 2:30 – 5:20 p.m.
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Social Work 4I03:
Social Work and Indigenous Peoples
Term 1, 2015/16

Course Description:

This course introduces the student to the cultural identities of the Indigenous people of Canada and North America, examining their traditional values, cultural-based behaviours and the effects of colonialism and imperialism due to the consequences of social policies/legislation, social work practice and research. Attention will be given to the cultural-specific skills and approaches particular to traditional and current helping practices from an Indigenous worldview. This course also examines the current social systems in place which work with Indigenous People/Issues and explores their suitability.

The interdisciplinary work of Indigenous scholars and practitioners in this course provides a knowledge base for examining strategies in building alliances between Indigenous and social work practitioners, while transforming our encounters in the context of social work practice, policy and research.

Course Objectives: This course will provide students with an understanding of an Indigenous perspective relating to:

- 1) To provide students with an understanding of the historical, political and social implications endured by Indigenous peoples in North America.
- 2) To provide students with an understanding of Indigenous perspectives of helping and healing through means of Indigenous philosophy/knowledge and culture.
- 3) To help students critically analyze social work practices, cultural competency and cultural safety when serving Indigenous peoples.
- 4) To evaluate strategies and to develop “best practice principles” as Allies and Indigenous social workers in the delivery of social work practice to Indigenous people/communities.
- 5) To provide students with an understanding of Indigenous research and ethics in social work.

The basic assumptions of this course concur with the broader curriculum context set by the **School of Social Work's Statement of Philosophy:**

As social workers, we operate in a society characterized by power imbalances that affect us all. These power imbalances are based on age, class, ethnicity, gender identity, geographic location, health, ability, race, sexual identity and income. We see personal troubles as inextricably linked to oppressive structures. We believe that social workers must be actively involved in the understanding and transformation of injustices in social institutions and in the struggles of people to maximize control over their own lives.

Student Responsibilities

Students are expected to contribute to the creation of a respectful and constructive learning environment. Students should read material in preparation for class, attend class on time and remain for the full duration of the class. A formal break will be provided in the middle of each class, students are to return from the break on time.

In the past, student and faculty have found that non-course related use of laptop computers and hand-held electronic devices during class to be distracting and at times disruptive. Consequently, during class students are expected to only use such devices for taking notes and other activities directly related to the lecture or class activity taking place.

Audio or video recording in the classroom without permission of the instructor is strictly prohibited.

Form and Style

Written assignments must be typed and double-spaced and submitted with a front page containing the title, student's name, student number, and the date. Number all pages (except title page). Assignments should be stapled together. Please do NOT use plastic report covers or binders. Paper format must be in accordance with the current edition of American Psychological Association (APA) publication manual with particular attention paid to font size (Times-Roman 12), spacing (double spaced) and margins (minimum of 1 inch at the top, bottom, left and right of each page) as papers not meeting these requirements will not be accepted for grading. Students are expected to make use of relevant professional and social science literature and other bodies of knowledge in their term assignments. When submitting, please keep a spare copy of your assignments.

Submission Dates & Grading

Assignments are due at the beginning of class on the date specified. Late assignments will be penalized 5% of the grade for that assignment for each day or part thereof for which they are late (weekends count as one day). All assignments must be submitted before a course grade will be issued.

Privacy Protection

In accordance with regulations set out by the Freedom of Information and Privacy Protection Act, the University will not allow return of graded materials by placing them in boxes in departmental offices or classrooms so that students may retrieve their papers themselves; tests and assignments must be returned directly to the student. Similarly, grades for assignments for courses may only be posted using the last 5 digits of the student number as the identifying data. The following possibilities exist for return of graded materials:

1. Direct return of materials to students in class;
2. Return of materials to students during office hours;
3. Students attach a stamped, self-addressed envelope with assignments for return by mail;
4. Submit/grade/return papers electronically.

Arrangements for the return of assignments from the options above will be finalized during the first class.

Academic Integrity

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 result 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 6 suspension or expulsion from the university. It is the student's responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various kinds of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, specifically Appendix 3 at <http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity>. The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

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

Academic dishonesty also entails a student having someone sign in for them on a weekly course attendance sheet when they are absent from class and/or a student signing someone in who is known to be absent.

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. <http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/AcademicAccommodation-StudentsWithDisabilities.pdf>

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. Email Forwarding in MUGSI:
<http://www.mcmaster.ca/uts/support/email/emailforward.html>

*Forwarding will take effect 24-hours after students complete the process at the above link (Approved at the Faculty of Social Sciences meeting on Tues. May 25, 2010)

Required Texts:

1. Baskin, Cyndy (2011). *Strong Helpers' Teachings The Value of Indigenous Knowledges in the Helping Professions*. Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press Inc.
2. Sinclair, Raven, Hart, Michael Anthony & Bruyere, Gord (ed) (2009). *Wicihitowin Aboriginal Social Work in Canada*. Halifax: Fernwood Publishing.

Attendance

This course cannot be communicated in written form alone and requires the exposure to ideas, media, group discussion, and exercises presented in a classroom context. **Class attendance is compulsory.** Students attending less than 80% of classes will receive an automatic F grade.

Assignments:

1. **2 Personal Critical Reflection Journal Submissions** 2 x 15% each for a Total 30%

Students will be required to prepare and submit a collection of critical reflection journal entries. Each submission should include a minimum of 3 entries (max 5). Entries are to be in one of two formats: A) Typed using standard APA font and size, approximately two single spaced pages per entry. Each submission should include a cover page. B) Hand written on standard ruled 8 ½" x 11" papers, approximately 4 pages single spaced per entry. Each submission should include a cover page (hand written cover page is allowed). **Please note: students who choose to submit hand written submissions must ensure their hand writing is legible.** All submissions should have page numbers, and be stapled together

Critical reflection journals will be graded using the following criteria:

1. Identify the readings/text, class discussion(s), and/or lecture(s) that stimulates a critical reflection. Explain in sufficient details so that the reader understands what has caught your attention.
2. Explain why/how this information/class discussion has impacted you. Use critical reflective thinking to relate the material to your own personal experiences, thoughts and feelings. The instructor will be looking for a demonstration of self-awareness and the impact of the course material on that awareness.
3. Please informally reference class readings, class lectures/discussions, videos shown in class, etc., that will highlight the connection to your critical reflective thoughts and feelings
4. Paragraphs and sentences need to show complete thoughts and flow from one to the next.

Additional guiding questions for journal submissions (optional):

1. Discuss your views and role as an Ally or as an Indigenous person in relation to course learning within your critical reflection.
2. Has something presented in class or within the course content provoked something within you? How did you react? Why did you react that way?

3. Explain how this reflection might influence or impact you in future endeavours (such as in education, in your career, etc.).
4. Has your critical reflective learning process been impacted by other aspects of your life experience outside of the classroom? For example: other courses/teachings you are learning, reflecting on day-to-day experiences, reflecting on past experiences, dreams, stories, media, current events & news, etc.

Due Dates for Critical Reflection: Sept. 30th and Oct. 28th

2. Group Project

– Total 30%

A. 20% Collective Group Story Presentation: Due: Nov. 18 – Dec. 2 (3 classes)

The objective of this collective story assignment is to utilize an Indigenous approach (storytelling) to demonstrate your knowledge of the material you are learning, and to creatively present that learning to your peers. For this assignment, each group will work together to create a collective ‘story’ that weaves in concepts / learning from weeks 1 – 5 of the course (Sept 9 – Oct 7th). In weeks 6 – 9 (Oct 21- Nov 11) of the course, groups will continue to meet in class to work on how they wish to present/perform their collective story for presentation, as well as to work on their written *preface*.

Groups will be expected to prepare a brief ‘preface’ to their story / performance for the instructor in written format of approx 3-4 pages (typed, double spaced, cover letter, APA), due on the day of the presentation. This preface will include:

- What concepts from the course were you most drawn too incorporating in your story, and why?
- What inspired the creative process of the story making / storytelling? Or, how did the group come to an agreement on a direction for the collective story making process?
- How do you hope your peers will receive your story? What are the ‘messages’ within the story you aim to portray?
- What role did each group member play in the whole process? Please describe how the group worked together in co-creating the story.
- In concluding your preface, include a brief reflection statement by each group member about your experience in the group process (Ex: what was challenging in creating a collective story? What was surprising about the process?) Each reflection statement should be no longer than 2 paragraphs per group member.

Grading Criteria:

- A. Creativity and originality showcased in the presentation / performance of the story
- B. Inclusion of course content in the story that highlights group members engagement in meaning making and transformative learning of the content
- C. Story is presented with a clear focus and purpose; as supported by the written preface
- D. Ability of the group to work cohesively; as showcased through the performance/presentation and the written nature of the preface.
- E. Concise and clearly written preface

B. 10% Whole Class Circle Peer Feedback: Due: Nov. 18 – Dec. 2 (3 classes)

The class will listen to each group's presentation and offer feedback, reflective comments, and general discussion. Attendance will be taken and students who participate in the discussion each week over the 3 week presentation period (Nov. 18 – Dec 2) will receive the 10% grade. Groups who are presenting will be able to self-evaluate their group and presentation within the discussion.

3. Major Paper

(12 - 15 pages) – Total 40%

In this assignment you are asked to describe a specific social work role and/or project and to creatively envision how Indigenous approaches and relationship building strategies could occur in that context, taking into account historical, political, social, economic, and contemporary realities that impact Indigenous peoples and Indigenous approaches. On a whole, this paper is to demonstrate your learning as an emerging social worker regarding Indigenous approaches and relationship building strategies that you believe will be most meaningful with Indigenous peoples.

Specifically, you are to choose a role/job or project that falls within one of the following scopes of practice:

- I. Direct practice / Individual focused social work
- II. Community based social work
- III. Policy development and/or Research

In writing your paper, you are asked to draw on your creativity in imagining how the role/project you are most drawn to focus on *could* occur. For example, if you choose to focus on the direct practice social work role of a child protection worker, how would you *ideally* be integrating Indigenous approaches and relationship building within that child welfare system as a worker?, and with the individual clients/people you work with? Do not be limited to how things *actually are* but how you would like to see them. This idealized version of practice will be balanced by a critical analysis of how things actually are in your chosen scope of practice role/project.

Your paper will address the following:

1. A brief introduction that explains what scope of practice your role/project falls within, and why you chose to explore this area of future practice. How does this relate to you? What is your social location?
2. A brief environmental scan of your chosen role/project with both academic and non-academic sources, which demonstrates what that role/project looks like in 'real life' presently. This will encompass objectively noting gaps or trends at the regional, provincial or national level. Students are encouraged to include an 'Indigenous lens' in their scan by being conscious of detecting whether Indigenous approaches or relationship strategies exist within current roles/projects.
3. Introduce and creatively describe how your role or project would demonstrate Indigenous social work practice using an Indigenous approach.
 - Identify how you would put into practice your understanding of Indigenous and relationship building strategies you have learned from the course readings, into your role/ project. Cite and source course readings to show your integration of the material/learning, with your proposed role/project.

4. Discuss why you believe your role / project could develop meaningful strategies and reconciliation (alliance building) approaches that will be useful to both you and possible future Indigenous peoples in your social work practice.
5. Provide a critical comparative analysis of how your proposed role/project differs or compliments current examples discussed from your environmental scan. This section is meant to showcase your critical analysis skills, and how you can integrate all of the paper's elements into a cohesive conversation that evokes original thought. Please take note of historical, political, social, economic, and contemporary realities that impact Indigenous peoples/Indigenous approaches and discuss these in your critical analysis.
6. In your conclusion, identify how you plan to incorporate the knowledge gained through this course and the assignments into your future social work practice strategies, and your personhood.

Due: Friday December 9, 2015

Grading Criteria:

- A. Environmental scan (ability to organize and present an objective, balanced, and relatively thorough overview as it relates to your chosen role/project, ability to incorporate an Indigenous lens in the scan)
- B. Creativity in proposed role/ project and the ability to integrate Aboriginal social work practice and approaches
- C. Critical analysis (comparative analysis skills, historical, social, economic, political, contemporary implications within analysis, ability to evoke original thought through analysis)
- D. Support your paper with course readings, literature, media, lectures, personal interviews, and course experiences. Minimum of 15 referenced sources
- E. Identify concrete and aspirational strategies for relationship building and practice strategies
- F. Use correct APA format.

Course Weekly Topics and Readings

WK	DATE	TOPIC	READINGS
1	Sept. 9	Welcome & Teaching circle overview of course syllabus & assignments. Introduction to Indigenous ways of being, knowing and doing by exploring 'mino bimaadizwin', and the 'Mishomis teachings.' Preparing ourselves for the journey ahead. Sharing circle	
2	Sept. 16	Understand the nature of colonization and how this affects the practice of social work with Indigenous peoples	Wicihitowin – Chapter 1& 2

		Formation of groups, followed by in class group work.	Strong Helpers – Chapter 1 & 2
3	Sept. 23	Aboriginal Theoretical Perspectives and Worldviews in Social Work In class group work.	Wicihitowin – Chapter 3 Strong Helpers – Chapter 4, 5, 8
4	Sept. 30	Aboriginal Theoretical Perspectives and Worldviews in Social Work In class group work. 1st Critical Reflection Journal Due	Wicihitowin – Chapter 7, 9 Strong Helpers – Chapter 3, 6
5	Oct. 7	Being an Ally, and working with Allies with Indigenous people/communities In class group work.	Wicihitowin – Chapter 10 Strong Helpers – Chapter 13
		Oct 12 – 17 Fall Reading Week	No Class
6	Oct. 21	Indigenous Communities In class group work.	Wicihitowin – Chapter 6 Strong Helpers – Chapter 7
7	Oct. 28	Indigenous Children at the Centre In class group work. 2nd Critical Reflection Journal Due	Wicihitowin – Chapter 4 Strong Helpers – Chapter 10
8	Nov. 4	Healing Justice In class group work.	Wicihitowin – Chapter 5 Strong Helpers – Chapter 9
9	Nov. 11	Research & Pedagogy with Indigenous Communities The End of the World as We know it In class group work.	Wicihitowin – Chapter 8, 11, 12 Strong Helpers – Chapter 11, 12 & 14
10	Nov. 18	Class Presentations Peer Review – Class Discussion	
11	Nov. 25	Class Presentations Peer Review – Class Discussion	

12	Dec. 2	Class Presentations Peer Review – Class Discussion Wrap Up, Sharing circle & Pot Luck	Last Class
	Dec. 9	Final Papers Due	

Additional Resources

Belanger, Y.D. (2010). *Ways of knowing: An introduction to Native studies in Canada*. Toronto, Ontario: Nelson Education Ltd.

Bellefeuille, G. & Ricks, F. (2003). A pathway to restoration: From child protection to community wellness. *Native Social Work Journal*, 5, p.23-43.

Bishop, Anne. (2002). Breaking the cycle of oppression in people (6th Ed.) (p. 60-77). Halifax, Nova Scotia: Fernwood Publishing.

Blackstock, Cindy. (2010). The Canadian human rights tribunal on First Nations child welfare: Why if Canada wins, equality and justice lose. *Children and Youth Services Review*, doi: 10.1016/j.childyouth.2010.09.002

Brave Heart, Maria Yellow Horse. (2000). Wakiksuyapi: Carrying the historical trauma of the Lakota. *Tulane Studies in Social Welfare* (p. 245-266).

Carniol, B. (2010). *Case Critical: Social Services and social justice in Canada* (6th Ed.). Toronto, Ontario: Between the Lines.

Cannon, M.J. & Sunseri, L. (Eds.). (2009). *Racism, colonialism and indigeneity in Canada*. Don Mills, Ontario: Oxford University Press.

Cooper, I. & Stacey Moore, G. (Eds.). (2009). *Walking in the Good Way/Ioterihwakwarihshion Tsi Ihse: Aboriginal social work education*. Toronto, Ontario: Canadian Scholar's Press, Inc.

Davis, L. (2010). *Alliances: Re/envisioning indigenous-non-indigenous relationships*. Toronto, Ontario: University of Toronto Press.

Dickason, O.P. & Newbigging, W. (2010). A concise history of Canada's First Nations (2nd Ed.). Don Mills, Ontario: Oxford University Press.

Freire, Paulo. (2000). *Pedagogy of the oppressed* (30th Anniversary Ed.) (p. 43-69). New York, NY: The Continuum International Publishing Group Inc.

- Freeman, B. (2011). Indigenous pathways to anti-oppressive practice. In D. Baines (Ed.) *Doing anti-oppressive practice: Social justice social work* (p. 116-131) (2nd Ed.). Halifax, Nova Scotia: Fernwood Publishing.
- Fuchs, D., McKay, S. & Brown, I. (2012). *Awakening the spirit: Moving forward in child welfare voices from the prairies*. Regina, Saskatchewan: Canadian Plains Research Centre, University of Regina
- Hart, M.A. (2002). *Seeking Mino-Pimatisiwin: An Aboriginal approach to helping*. Halifax, Nova Scotia: Fernwood Publishing.
- MacDonald, F. (2009). The Manitoba Government's shift to "autonomous" First Nations Child Welfare: Empowerment or privatization? In A.M. Timpson (Ed.), *First Nations, first thoughts: the impact of Indigenous thought in Canada* (p. 173-198). Vancouver, British Columbia: UBC Press.
- Miller, J.R. (1991). Owen Glendower, Hotspur, and Canadian Indian policy. In J.R. Miller (Ed.), *Sweet promises: A reader on Indian-White relations in Canada* (p. 323-352). Toronto, Ontario: University of Toronto Press.
- Morrisseau, C. (1999). *Into the daylight: A wholistic approach to healing*. Toronto, Ontario: University of Toronto Press.
- Mullaly, B. (2002). *Challenging oppression: A critical social work approach*. Don Mills: Oxford University Press.
- Saulis, M. A. (2006). Program and Policy Development form a Holistic Aboriginal Perspective. In A. Westhues (Ed.) *Canadian social policy: Issues and perspectives* (p. 115-130). Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press.
- van Wormer, Katherine. (2003). Restorative justice: A model for social work practice with families. *Families in Society: The Journal of Contemporary Human Services* (p. 441-448).
- Weaver, Hillary. (2004). The elements of cultural competence: Applications with Native American Clients. *Journal of Ethnic & Cultural Diversity in Social Work*, Vol. 13 (1), p. 19-35.
- White, J., Wingart, S., Beavon, D. & Maxim, P. (Eds.) (2006). *Aboriginal Policy Research: Moving forward, making a difference*. Vol. III. Toronto, Ontario: Thompson Educational Publishing. (For more information, see website: <http://www.thompsonbooks.com/higher-education.html>)

Further Resources:

- A. Indian Act (pdf file) at this website: <http://laws.justice.gc.ca/PDF/Statute/I/I-5.pdf>
- B. The Report on the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) (1996): Online documents available on Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Website. Also

available at the University of Waterloo Porter Library. <http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1307458586498/1307458751962>

- C. Gathering Strength: Canada's Aboriginal Action Plan. A Progress Report (2000). The Government of Canada Response to the Report on the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples. Available online:
<http://publications.gc.ca/collections/Collection/R32-192-2000E.pdf>

- D. Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Findings. Available online
<http://www.trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/index.php?p=890>

Course Modification Policy

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.