



THE POLITICS OF TERRITORY & IDENTITY (ANTH 298:10)
DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY
ST. FRANCIS XAVIER UNIVERSITY
COURSE OUTLINE – FALL 2024

I would like to begin by acknowledging that we are in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq People. This territory is covered by the "Treaties of Peace and Friendship" which Mi'kmaq and Wolastoqiyik (Maliseet) Peoples first signed with the British Crown in 1725. The treaties did not deal with surrender of lands and resources but in fact recognized Mi'kmaq and Wolastoqiyik (Maliseet) title and established the rules for what was to be an ongoing relationship between nations.

INSTRUCTOR

Dr. Rashed Alam (he/him)

Office: JBB 335G

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Office Hours: Sept 04 – Dec 06 (except for Fall Study Break); Tuesdays 10-12 PM; Thursdays 4-6 PM; Fridays 12-2 PM.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Thursdays 6:30-9:30 PM

Classroom: BB 337

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The reproduction of identities is often shaped by contestation over territorial stretches. Powerful states and empires have historically dominated ethnic minorities, Indigenous, and colonized populations to purify 'national' territories. The creation of modern nation-states went hand in hand with 'othering' ethnic minorities and Indigenous populations by erasing and then rewriting their histories and politico-territorial identities. A form of structural violence is

embedded in such national territory/identity-making projects that often result in conflicts and displacement. This course investigates the complex relations between territory and identity and analyzes collective experiences of forced migration and displacement. The course contents examine different cases of 'national' claims over territories and explore the structural processes that transform people from 'humans' to 'refugee subjects.' While the course informs students on the structural links between identity, nationhood, and citizenship in a globalized era, it also investigates "other" forms of identification and senses of belonging that are beyond the nation, sometimes coexisting peacefully with it, other times posing serious challenges to it. Students are expected to develop crucial research skills in examining the historical record of Canada towards immigrants, Indigenous people, refugees, and many 'others.'

COURSE OBJECTIVES

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

- Distinguish among similar concepts such as national belonging from other forms of collective identities, e.g., sub-national or supra-national identities.
- Master skills in applying scholarly approaches to analyze how imperial and colonial powers re-map territories and reconfigure societies and cultures.
- Comprehend how contestations over territories rewrite history, redefine identity, and reclaim a sense of belonging.
- Critically examine Indigenous people's experience with different mechanisms of modern nation-states, including the legacy of colonial assimilation, the hegemony of citizenship, the experience of systemic racism of settler states, and Indigenous people's struggle for sovereignty and self-determination.
- Develop competencies to effectively investigate the multidimensional trauma of refugeehood within the legacy of colonial and racial injustice.
- Improve crucial skills in developing research arguments, analyzing theoretical perspectives, and organizing research evidence in written assignments.
- Hone their competencies in developing and presenting critical ideas and performing teamwork.

COURSE MATERIALS

All course readings are available to registered students via Kwe' (Moodle), the StFX library's electronic database, and open-access internet resources. Students are not required to purchase any textbooks.

COURSE EVALUATION

<i>Assessment</i>	<i>Grade (%)</i>	<i>Deadline</i>
Active Learning & Participation	05	Throughout the term
Identity Autoethnography	10	September 26
Mid-term Exam	25	October 10
Nationalism Podcast	10	October 31
Essay	25	November 28
Final Exam (Take-home)	25	December 16

ACTIVE LEARNING & PARTICIPATION (5%)

The course administers several active learning activities throughout the term. Active learning activities promote student engagement through informal and formal exercises. Participation in such learning events encourages students to critically reflect on course materials and engage in problem-solving activities. Furthermore, active learning transforms students from passive to active learners, sharing agency between the instructor and students. Students will be able to express creative and critical ideas through writing, teamwork, and technology tools.

Students will participate in different individual and group active learning exercises each week. They are primarily low-stakes, ungraded thinking and writing exercises. Some examples include discussing course materials with your peers, summarizing the author's arguments in one sentence, designing a poster highlighting a community event, and participating in collective brainstorming. These crucial exercises will prepare students to perform better in high-stakes writing assignments and exams. Students who attend class regularly (at least 80% of classes) and participate in these activities will get full marks (5% grade).

IDENTITY AUTOETHNOGRAPHY (10%)

The politics of identity and territorialization often directly endorse social hierarchy and structural inequality. Such politics can limit or extend one's sociopolitical rights and economic access. Therefore, it affects us both collectively and individually. In this assignment, reflect on the territorial/historical dimensions of your identity, i.e., how they affect your sense of belonging, material conditions, political ideology, kinship networks, and so on. You might consider responding to the following questions:

- How do you identify yourself in terms of homeland / nationality / citizenship / indigeneity?

- How did you acquire this identity(ies) – by birth, by descent, by naturalization or by other means?
- How would you describe your belonging to this identity(ies) – legal, cultural, or merely materialistic?
- Have you benefited – e.g., socially, politically, economically – from this identity(ies)?
- Have you suffered from the burden of this identity(ies)? How?

Your autoethnography should not just be narratives of your own experience. It should also reflect on scholarly materials. Based on a critical review of two peer-reviewed scholarly articles, elaborate on how your identity(ies) is shaped by wider historical trajectories (e.g., mass migration, colonialism), structural violence (e.g., racism), institutions (e.g., state bureaucracy), political-economic forces (e.g., neoliberalism), structures (e.g., national identities, indigeneity). The length of the paper should be no more than 750 words. More details about the assignment including a rubric, will be provided closer to the due date (Sept 26).

MID-TERM EXAM (25%)

The mid-term test will take place during the regular class time on October 10 in JBB337. It covers all course materials from Sept 12 to Oct 3 classes. The exam is composed of multiple-choice questions and short answers.

NATIONALISM PODCAST (10%)

A podcast is a creative and engaging medium to express opinions and ideas. It enhances teamwork, critical analysis, public speaking, and digital literacy skills. Students will be divided into teams. Each team will be given a topic related to the course themes to create a podcast on that topic. The team members will review at least two peer-reviewed journal articles related to the topic and record a 5-10-minute audio conversation session discussing the materials as experts. This assessment intends to demonstrate students' knowledge of the subject, scholarly collaboration, and critical thinking competencies. Each team will be required to provide a summarized 2-page script of the podcast. All podcasts and scripts will be made available in Kwe' for the entire class. More details about the assessment and a grading rubric will be provided closer to the due date (October 31).

ESSAY (25%)

One of the main goals of the course is to strengthen students' analytical skills in examining the complex relations between territory and identity. Students are required to facilitate a literature-

based research project and write a 1500-word essay. The focus of the research should be relevant to course themes, such as national identity, borderlands, cartographic politics, indigeneity, displacement, refugees, diasporas, and settler-colonialism. It is strongly advised that you visit during my office hours if you require assistance in deciding on your research topic. The paper should clearly outline and support a central thesis and ideally focus on a case study. The central thesis of the essay must be supported by a critical review of 5-7 peer-reviewed sources. More details about the essay, including a rubric, will be provided closer to the due date (Nov 28).

FINAL EXAM (25%)

The take-home final exam will be based on what you have learned throughout the course. It will be composed of essay questions and critical questions. The exam questions will be available on Kwe' on the first day of the exam period (Dec 9, 9 AM) and will be due on Dec 16 (9 AM). We will discuss the detailed exam instructions and a rubric in the final weeks of the semester, particularly in the last class. Please do not purchase a travel ticket before the end of the official examination period.

WEEKLY COURSE SCHEDULE AND REQUIRED READINGS

SEPT 5: INTRODUCTION

Course overview

Syllabus discussion

SEPT 12: THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

- Gupta, Akhil, and James Ferguson. 1992. "Beyond 'Culture': Space, Identity, and the Politics of Difference." *Cultural Anthropology* 7 (1): 6–23.
- Kaplan, David H., and Guntram H. Herb. 2011. "How Geography Shapes National Identities." *National Identities* 13 (4): 349–60.

SEPT 19: NATIONALISM, TERRITORY, & CONTESTED IDENTITY

- Baker, Tabitha A. 2024. "'We All Just Want a Flag to Get behind': The Politics of English National Identity." *National Identities* 26 (2): 123–39.

- Farah, Randa. 2010. "Sovereignty on Borrowed Territory: Sahrawi Identity in Algeria." *Georgetown Journal of International Affairs* 11 (2): 59–66.

SEPT 26: THE POLITICS OF CARTOGRAPHY

- Richardson, Paul Benjamin. 2016. "Beyond the Nation and into the State: Identity, Belonging, and the 'Hyper-Border.'" *Transactions* 41 (2): 201–15.
- Bal, Ellen, and Timour Claquin Chambugong. 2014. "The Borders That Divide, the Borders That Unite: (Re)Interpreting Garo Processes of Identification in India and Bangladesh." *Journal of Borderlands Studies* 29 (1): 95–109.

OCT 3: IDENTITIES, PLACES, AND LANDSCAPES

- Ganapathy, Sandhya. 2013. "Imagining Alaska: Local and Translocal Engagements with Place." *American Anthropologist* 115 (1): 96–111.
- Mawani, Renisa. 2007. "Legalities of Nature: Law, Empire, and Wilderness Landscapes in Canada." *Social Identities* 13 (6): 715–34.

OCT 10: MID-TERM EXAM

OCT 17: FALL STUDY BREAK

OCT 24: INDIGENEITY

- Sylvain, Renée. 2014. "Essentialism and the Indigenous Politics of Recognition in Southern Africa." *American Anthropologist* 116 (2): 251–64.
- Blackburn, Carole. 2009. "Differentiating Indigenous Citizenship: Seeking Multiplicity in Rights, Identity, and Sovereignty in Canada." *American Ethnologist* 36 (1): 66–78.

OCT 31: SPACES OF EXCEPTION

- Rahman, Farhana. 2021. "'I Find Comfort Here': Rohingya Women and Taleems in Bangladesh's Refugee Camps." *Journal of Refugee Studies* 34 (1): 874–89.
- Blommaert, Jan. 2009. "Language, Asylum, and the National Order." *Current Anthropology* 50 (4): 415–41.

NOV 7: “REFUGEE SUBJECTS” IN THE HUMANITARIAN REGIME

- Oka, Rahul Chandrashekhar. 2014. “Coping with the Refugee Wait: The Role of Consumption, Normalcy, and Dignity in Refugee Lives at Kakuma Refugee Camp, Kenya.” *American Anthropologist* 116 (1): 23–37.
- Trapp, Micah M. 2016. “You-Will-Kill-Me Beans: Taste and the Politics of Necessity in Humanitarian Aid.” *Cultural Anthropology* 31 (3): 412–37.

NOV 14: DIASPORA

- Lemon, Edward, and Bradley Jardine. 2024. “‘We Are Living in Fear’: Transnational Repression, Regime Type, and Double Precarity in the Uyghur Diaspora.” *Diaspora* 24 (1): 117–40.
- Thiranagama, Sharika. 2014. “Making Tigers from Tamils: Long-Distance Nationalism and Sri Lankan Tamils in Toronto.” *American Anthropologist* 116 (2): 265–78.

NOV 21: SETTLER-COLONIALISM

- Jackson, Deborah Davis. 2011. “Scents of Place: The Displacement of a First Nations Community in Canada.” *American Anthropologist* 113 (4): 606–18.
- Maddison, Sarah. 2013. “Indigenous Identity, ‘authenticity’ and the Structural Violence of Settler Colonialism.” *Identities* 20 (3): 288–303.

NOV 28: CANADA’S “OTHERS”

- Sugiman, Pamela. 2008. “Days you Remember”: Japanese Canadian Women and the Violence of Internment. In M. Hajdukowski-Ahmed, N. Khanlou & H. Moussa (Eds.), *Not Born a Refugee Woman: Contesting Identities, Rethinking Practices* (pp. 113-134). New York: Berghahn Books.
- Film: *Continuous Journey*

DEC 5: COURSE REVIEW

A brief review of the Final Exam

Q&A sessions on the course/Final Exam

COURSE POLICIES

CLASS ATTENDANCE

Anthropology encourages collaboration and peer discussions. Therefore, class attendance is mandatory to engage students with course materials and class discussions. Students must register class attendance in Kwe'. The in-class active learning activities will also document class attendance. Students present in at least 80% of classes will get the full Active Learning and Participation marks (5% grade). If you miss three or more classes, whether for illness or any other reason, your ability to pass will be severely compromised. Inform me or the Dean's office if you must miss classes.

SUBMISSION OF ASSIGNMENTS

All assignments must be submitted to Moddle. Assignments submitted by email will not be accepted. It is also important that you always retain a copy of your assignments.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS

5% off per day late unless an extension has been granted. Late assignments will not be accepted after five days (including weekends) beyond the original deadline without appropriate documentation from the Dean's office. All deferred or makeup assessments will be essay-based.

REAPPRAISALS OF ASSIGNMENTS

If you are concerned or confused about the grading of your assignment after you get it back, please see me during my office hours. All grade-related issues must be discussed during the office hours. If you would like me to reappraise your work, please submit the original paper with a maximum 300-word explanation of why you think you deserve a higher score. This must be done within seven calendar days of the release of your grade. Although I will review your grade, it may stay the same or even decrease.

USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI)

Please note that the use of artificial intelligence aids (e.g., chatGPT) is not permitted in any course assessment.

COURSE DROP INFORMATION

Students may drop a course, online in Banner, on or before the relevant deadline. See the calendar of events in the StFX Academic Calendar for the drop-date. Please keep in mind that the permission to drop or change a course after the course change deadline can only be granted by the Dean's office and that informing the professor, or merely ceasing to attend class is not sufficient.

USE OF TECHNOLOGY

You can use a laptop in class, but turn off/silence your cell phone. The use of electronic devices in class for purposes not related to the course is not allowed. Please do not tape/video record the class.

COPYRIGHT & INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Course materials designed for use in this course at StFX University are the property of the instructor, unless otherwise stated by the instructor. Copying this material for distribution, online posting, or selling of this material to third parties without permission is subject to Canadian Copyright Law and is strictly prohibited.

EMAIL AND COMMUNICATION

Office hours are strongly recommended for course-related discussions. However, feel free to email me on weekdays. I will respond within 48 hours. Please put the course number in the subject line of your email and include your name and student number at the end of all correspondence. Please note that I will be offline during weekends. You are requested to use StFX credentials for all academic correspondence.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated. Suspected cases of plagiarism will be reported to the appropriate authorities and proven cases will result in a mark of zero for the assignment. See the University's policy on plagiarism and cheating at <https://www.mystfx.ca/registrars-office/academic-integrity>. Not intending to plagiarise is not a legitimate excuse. Know what is included in the definition and ensure that the paper you submit meets acceptable academic standards according to the policy. When in doubt, consult with me.

RESPECT: ACADEMIC DISCOURSE, CLASS CLIMATE, AND INCLUSIVITY

A core social value in anthropology is respect. In this classroom, you are likely to encounter ideas that you find surprising or even unsettling. You should feel free to voice your opinions; at the same time, you should feel free to respectfully challenge ideas with which you disagree. When engaging in discussion, I encourage you to listen — to be attentive to the experiences and views of others before formulating your own arguments, reactions, and critiques. One of the most important things I hope you will learn in this class is that a diversity of backgrounds and opinions is not a threat but an opportunity for thinking about and addressing social issues that concern us all.

EQUITABLE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Everyone learns more effectively in a respectful, safe and equitable learning environment, free from discrimination and harassment. I invite you to work with me to create a classroom space — both real and virtual — that fosters and promotes values of human dignity, equity, nondiscrimination and respect for diversity. Please feel free to contact the Human Rights and Equity Advisor, Megan Fogarty if you have questions or concerns about equity in the classroom or in the StFX Community in general. Megan can be contacted by email at mfogarty@stfx.ca or by telephone at 902-867-5306.

INFORMATION ABOUT REQUESTING AN ACCOMMODATION AT STFX

If you have a disability and would like to request accommodations, please contact me during the first week of the semester so that your accommodations may be provided in a timely manner. The Tramble Centre for Accessible Learning (CAL) provides assistance in determining and facilitating appropriate accommodations for students with verified disabilities. The Tramble Centre for Accessible Learning welcomes students with documented permanent disabilities and offers them a student-centred program of support. Located in Room 108 of the Angus L MacDonald Library, new and returning students meet with program staff to discuss options for support. The deadline for registering with the Centre is two weeks prior to the end of classes each semester and three business days' notice is required for booking all accommodated tests and exams. To book an appointment, go to the Tramble Room website: <https://www.mystfx.ca/accessible-learning/>

ACADEMIC RESPONSIBILITIES

Students are responsible for understanding and adhering to the requirements of this course as well as the academic regulations outlined in Chapter 3 of the Academic Calendar. I am responsible for maintaining the academic standards of St Francis Xavier University as well as of my discipline as I transmit knowledge about the course subject to the students and foster the development of critical academic reading, researching, analytical and writing skills.

Best of luck with the semester!