

Introduction to Indigenous Anthropology 234.20 2019

Dr. L. Jane McMillan

Department of Anthropology BB 306

902.867.5021 ljmcmill@stfx.ca

Office hours: Tuesdays & Wednesdays 4:30 – 6:00 JBB 306 **or anytime by appointment**

Course Description:

The diversity and complexity of contemporary Indigenous cultural, political and legal issues are explored using anthropological methods and theories. Beginning with the historical antecedents of colonial relations and leading to contemporary ethnography, this course assesses the impacts of state policies and legislation on Indigenous cultures, treaty rights and livelihoods today. Students will study engaged anthropology and the relationships between the State and Indigenous peoples in areas of Indigenous rights, culture, law, governance, politics, environment, media, social development, gender, and health, and critically examine potential pathways and strategies toward reconciliation, effective treaty relations and systemic change. Special attention will be paid to monitoring the impacts of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, and the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women.

Course Format:

This is an introductory survey course consisting of assigned readings, lectures, in class writing activities, tests, films, guest speakers, group discussions and presentations. Students are required to write midterm and final exams, submit written assignments and present reading summaries. Regular attendance, preparedness, punctuality and full participation are essential to the successful completion of this course. *All assignments are due in class. Late assignments will not be accepted.*

Goals & Objectives:

1. To critically assess the impacts of colonization on Indigenous peoples in Canada;
2. To examine and compare strategies to address social change and governance in Indigenous communities;
3. To engage in discussions and develop action plans to correct systemic discrimination;
4. To understand and practice ethical protocols and collaborative methodologies used in conducting anthropological research with Indigenous communities;
5. To assess and implement the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission or produce and employ alternative strategies to active rights recognition;
6. To learn how to research and write academic essays and reports for anthropology;
7. To become adept at Chicago style citation.

Required Texts:

Talaga, Tanya. 2017. *Seven Fallen Feather: Racism, Death, and Hard Truths in a Northern City*. Toronto: Anansi Press.

Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. 2015. *Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. Volume: One Summary*. Toronto: Lorimer.

Sinclair, Murry. 2018. *Thunder Bay Police Services Board Investigation Final Report*
https://slasto-tsapno.gov.on.ca/ocpc-ccop/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2018/12/TBPSB_Investigation_Final_Report_-_EN-FINAL-1.pdf

Various articles as assigned throughout the course (accessible on line through the library or on moodle).

Schedule of Readings, Lectures, and Assignments

January 9: Introduction – All Our Relations: Introductions, course over view, big issues: racism, colonialism, reconciliation and treaty relationships – film Colonization Road.

January 16: Contextualizing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission: TRC pages 1-37 and read the 94 Calls to Action. Principles of Reconciliation. Cultural genocide.

January 23: TRC: The History pages 37-134. Colonization, missionaries, assimilation policies, discriminatory legislation, racialization.

January 30: Research and citation skills workshop with Meghan Landry and film night with Keeley MacCuish.

Write a summary and review of the film shown in class. What are the key themes of the film? What are the key issues? How does the film inform your understanding of Indigenous rights? Maximum 5 pages due next class 10%.

February 5: Learning Lodge on Tuesday night with knowledge keeper on campus – Kerry Prosper and guest. Environmental Sustainability and Indigenous Knowledges. 6:30 – 9:00. Opportunity for bonus marks.

February 6: TRC: The Legacy pages 135-182. Intergenerational trauma, child welfare, health, education, justice. **Film review due 10%**

February 13: **Redress and MMIW Event.**

We are hosting as a class a special event to raise awareness of the MMIW and Girls and Men. We will work with the Indigenous student society to organize, promote and deliver a university wide event. We will host guest speakers. Students will be assigned roles and responsibilities and conduct a participant observation exercise. Participant observation is a cornerstone method in anthropology, it involves observing and participating in an event and taking very detailed notes of EVERYTHING that is going on around you to better understand what people do and why they do the things they do in a particular context, place and time.

For your assignment A] set up the context (introductory paragraph saying what is happening and why?); B] describe in detail the presenter, the presentation, the audience, and the audience's reaction to what is presented; C] describe the location and your position in it (maybe draw a map). After the event is over take time to reflect and polish your notes with extra details; D] conclude with a paragraph on your reflections conducting this exercise and how you experienced the event. Submit your field notes (2-3 pages) in class **February 27**. Be prepared to compare and contrast your observations with your classmates.

Everyone will take field notes during the event and will write up their descriptions and reflections to be submitted the next class (event work and written assignments 10%.)

February 27: TRC: The Challenge of Reconciliation pages 182-245. **Midterm test 20%**. Midterm test will be an in class test. The questions will be short answer and essay style.

March 6: TRC: The Challenges of Reconciliation pages 246-317. Commemoration and implementing the calls to action. Group activities on sacred teachings.

March 13: Seven Fallen Feathers – Prologue and chapter 1 and 2. **Group presentations on sacred teaching 10%**

March 20: Seven Fallen Feathers – Chapters 3, 4, and 5.

Short critical essay evaluating the implementation of the TRC Calls to Action to date. Follow the format of the [Anthropology Department Essay Style Guide](#) and use Chicago style citation (double spaced, 12 point font, pages numbered) answering the question, Has Canada honoured its commitment to implement the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action? Include at least 3 academic sources in addition to the course materials a bibliography (this is an extra page not included in the 5 pages of text). **Short critical essay 10%**

March 27: Seven Fallen Feather – Chapters 6, 7, and 8. Senator Sinclair Thunder Bay Police Services Board Investigation.

April 2: Seven Fallen Feather – Chapter 9, 10 and Epilogue. Review and Sharing circle and snacks.

Final exam: In the April exam period. The exam will cover all of the materials of the course and will consist of essay style questions 40%.

The content of this course may be challenging and controversial. Please create an environment that fosters a climate of mutual trust and encourages the free exchange of diverse ideas. If you need assistance participating in this course please contact the professor.

Suggested reading:

1996 Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples. *Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples*. Vols. 1-5. Ottawa. (RCAP)

http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/webarchives/20071115053257/http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ch/rcap/sg/sgmm_e.html

Suggested viewing:

<http://aptn.ca>

Suggested listening:

<http://www.cbc.ca/radio/unreserved>

“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, non-discrimination and respect for diversity”.

* Academic integrity is a priority. Please familiarize yourself with this document.

<https://www2.mystfx.ca/sites/mystfx.ca.library/files/academic-integrity-document.pdf>

The materials in course Anthropology 234 at StFX are the property of the instructor, unless stated otherwise by the instructor. Online posting or selling this material to third parties for distribution without permission is subject to Canadian Copyright law and is strictly prohibited.

Syllabus is subject to change.

Attendance is required to successfully complete this course. Late assignments will not be accepted.

All assigned books are on reserve at the library.