INDIGST 3CC3
Rights and Relational Responsibilities: Indigenous Pathways to Resurgence

SPRING 2021
Online course

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Office Hours: By appointment

Lecture: Tuesdays and Thursdays
9am – 12pm (Online/Virtual)

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Course Description

*Indigenous narratives are archives of collective strength; “to speak them is to heal; to believe in them is to reimagine the world.”* (Sium & Ritskes, 2013, p. x).

As Daniel Health Francis has suggested “there are many stories about Indigenous peoples alive in the world today… Some stories give shape, substance, and purpose to our existence and help us to understand how to uphold our responsibilities to one another and the rest of creation.” (Francis, 2018, p. 2). At the same time, stories have been (and continue to be) imposed from the outside, propagating false understandings and problematic assumptions, many of which erase Indigenous lives and continued presence. These narratives work to flatten and/or minimize collective understandings of who we are, where we belong, and how we relate to each other.

This course will explore the various ways Indigenous people(s) have been made visible and invisible through narrative, focusing on, among other areas of investigation, historical and contemporary politics of representing Indigenous communities; stereotyping; cultural appropriation, and displacing settler narratives. It will engage Indigenous ways of knowing, postcolonial and de-colonization theory and unpack key concepts such as Indigeneity, place/land, identity colonialism, reconciliation, de-colonization and resurgence. At the same time, the course will explore a wide range of narratives produced by Indigenous artists, writers, filmmakers, musicians, and photographers. It will delve into the diverse ways Indigenous narratives are implicated in, products of, and themselves constitute politics of identity, visual sovereignty and self-determination. The course will consider diverse landscapes that shape not only our understanding of who we are, but also our rights and relational responsibilities to each other and landscapes we call home.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

**Learning expectations:**

- Explain how narratives are implicated in, products of, and themselves constitute politics of identity, visual sovereignty and self-determination.
- Differentiate between divergent understandings of Indigenous/Settler histories and contemporary experiences and explain how theoretical and disciplinary perspectives shape identity.
- Recognize Indigenous storytelling aesthetics and identify the diverse ways that Indigenous storytellers assert politics of identity, survivance, visual sovereignty, decolonization, resurgence and recognition.
- Demonstrate critical thinking skills by identifying and assessing the social, environmental and ethical themes presented in narratives.
• Develop and support arguments in creative written, oral and sharing circle formats.

Required Materials and Texts

Class Format
Grounded in Indigenous circle pedagogy, this course emphasises theoretical and applied concepts through a variety of mechanisms, including synchronous lectures, documentary and film, weekly readings, and experiential learning opportunities. A critical element of this engagement will include subjective reflections as a way of encouraging students to consider the implications of course content and learning, academically, personally, and professionally. Questions are encouraged. Respectful dialogue is expected. Self-care is an absolute necessity.

Course Evaluation – Overview
1. Homelands Photo Essay: 20%
2. Critical Reflections: 20%
3. Circle Discussion Participation: 10%
4. Circle Discussion Facilitation: 20%
5. Resurgent Narratives Presentations: 30%

Course Evaluation – Details

1. Critical Reflections (20%), ongoing
   The purpose of this paper is to help learners reflect not only on the topics discussed in each module but also the impact that learning these topics has had (or will have) on their learning journey. Each reflection will be 2 pages in length (double spaced, 12-pt in Times Roman, Arial or Calibri font). Reflections must focus not only on the content presented in each module but also summarize 2 core themes introduced (and possibly expanded on) thus far in the course. Requirements for submission include, but are not limited to:
   • a minimum of 3 citations introduced in the course in addition to a minimum of 2 researched sources
   • consideration of the impact of knowledge gained in the course for one’s own learning and positionality.
   • an introduction and conclusion that ties important areas of discussion in the together.
   • excellent spelling, grammar, transitions, paragraph and sentence structure.
2. Homelands Photo Essay (20%), due June 2

Indigenous worldviews conceptualize home more deeply as a web of relationships and responsibilities involving connections to human kinship networks; relationships with animals, plants, spirits and elements; relationships with the Earth, lands, waters and territories; and connection to traditional stories, songs, teachings, names and ancestors… the Indigenous concept of home as a feeling of “rootedness,” meaning that an Indigenous person, community and Nation feel at home when they have a reciprocal responsibility and stable relationship with such things as place, geography, animals, community, sense of belonging, identity, family, ancestors, stories and independence (Thistle, 2017. P. 14-15).

Narratives of space, place, and landscape are as varied and complex as the cultures and histories of the people who live within them. This assignment asks you to create a photo essay consisting of 3 photographs that describe your relationship to particular homelands. Feel free to incorporate photographs that represent different points in your life, up to a total of 2 photographs. However, given that the purpose of this assignment is to encourage you to explore the world around you, you will also need to include at least 1 photo that describes your relationship with your current environment. Please also consider the following questions:

- Who are you and what are your responsibilities to place?
  - What narratives have shaped your understanding of who you are and your responsibilities to place?
  - Where do these narratives come from? Who do they serve?
  - Who do they make visible and who do they erase?
  - How has the information presented thus far in the course impacted your perceptions and positionality?

Photo essays consist of the following:

- 250 - word introduction that introduces your background and experience, as well as the context that will be explored in the essay.
- 250 - word analysis of each image that discusses your reasons for choosing the homeland represented, as well as the meaning that particular place has signified in your life.
- 250 - word conclusion that considers the implication of course content on your understanding of home.

Requirements include, but are not limited to:

- a minimum of 3 photos/other media to develop and support a central thesis
  - Each photo/visual introduces an idea or concept
Analysis is developed through details, examples, reasons, definitions, anecdotes, similarities, differences and other kinds of detail

- a minimum of 3 citations introduced in the course in addition to a minimum of 2 researched sources
- consideration the impact of knowledge gained for one’s own learning and positionality.
- an introduction and conclusion that ties important areas of discussion in the essay together, often using key words from the thesis
- excellent spelling, grammar, transitions, paragraph and sentence structure.

3. Circle Discussion Participation (10%), ongoing
Each student is responsible for participating in weekly circle discussions on the previous week’s topic. There will be a total of 11 opportunities, however each student can miss one session without penalty. Note, you also have an opportunity to earn bonus marks if you participate in all 11 sessions.

4. Circle Discussion Facilitation (20%), ongoing
Working in groups of 3-4 students, each student is responsible for co-facilitating a circle discussion on an assigned topic. Students will be able to sign up for one of the topics below on a first come first serve basis

- Group 1: Indigenous Storytelling in Film, Television, & the News
- Group 2: Indigenous Storytelling in Art & Comedy
- Group 3: Indigenous Storytelling in Fashion and Music
- Group 4: Indigenous Storytelling in Relationship with Land & Indigenous Food Systems

5. Resurgent Narratives Presentations (30%), due June 8 & 10
Building on content introduced thus far in the course, students will work together in groups of 5-6 to explore the following questions introduced by Daniel Health Justice:

- Group 1: How do we learn to be human? What are the experiences, customs, traditions, and ceremonies that define our humanity? How Indigenous narratives help us to realize the full potential of our physical and imaginative human embodiment with healthy bodies, hearts, and minds?
- Group 2: How do we behave as good relatives? What are our rights and responsibilities to one another and to the other-than-
human world? How do Indigenous narratives help us to realize these relations in meaningful ways?

• Group 3: How do we become good ancestors? How do we create the kind of world and relationships that will nurture those who come after? How do Indigenous narratives help guide not only our lives but also future generations?

• Group 4: How do we learn to live together? What are the social and intellectual structures, conventions, and considerations that reduce or manage conflicts and encourage harmonious relations across our varied categories of difference? How do Indigenous narratives offer helpful models for those efforts?

This assignment requires you to construct a group written essay along with a 60-minute circle discussion (worth 15% of mark). Circle discussions will include group presentations (10 minutes), with an additional 40 minutes allocated for dedicated circle discussion and 10 minutes for closing. For the written portion (worth 15% of mark), groups must include a clear introduction (250 words) and conclusion (250 words), alongside body paragraphs that introduce 3 examples of resurgent media forms (could be a photo, art installation, piece of clothing or fashion line, comedy skit, film, novel, documentary, podcast, etc.) which articulate responses to each question (250 words for each media form with appropriate citations linking chosen media forms to course themes and content).

Weekly Course Schedule and Required Readings

Week 1: May 3-9

May 4 – Introduction to the Course Themes and Structure

Lecture:
  o Introduction to the Course Themes and Structure

Readings:

Assessment:
  o Circle Discussion 1: Introductions & Circle Protocols
  o Critical Reflection 1

May 6 – Indigenous Roots of Identity

Media: (No lecture)
Readings/Media:

Assessment:
- Circle Discussion 2: Indigenous Roots of Identity
- Critical Reflection 2

**Week 2: May 10-16**

**May 11 – Narratives of Settler Colonialism**

Lecture: Narratives of Settler Colonialism and Legislated Identity

Readings:

**May 13th – Legislated Identity**

Media: (No lecture)

Readings:

Assessments:
Week 3: May 17 - 23

May 17 – Indigenous Peoples in Popular Culture: Film and Television

Lecture: Indigenous Peoples in Popular Culture: Film, Television, and the News

Readings:
- The Walrus: How Indigenous Filmmakers Are Changing Contemporary Cinema
  [https://thewalrus.ca/how-indigenous-filmmakers-are-changing-contemporary-cinema/](https://thewalrus.ca/how-indigenous-filmmakers-are-changing-contemporary-cinema/)

May 19 – Indigenous Peoples in the News

Media: (No Lecture)
- CBC News: The National: Influential filmmakers react to state of Indigenous film in Canada [https://youtu.be/peRTgZbuE0](https://youtu.be/peRTgZbuE0)
- Thomas King: I’m Not the Indian You Had in Mind [https://vimeo.com/39451956](https://vimeo.com/39451956)
- Indigenous People React to Indigenous Representation in Film and TV (2019) [https://youtu.be/7ZkyL5pn74E](https://youtu.be/7ZkyL5pn74E)

Readings:

Assessments:
- Circle Discussion 4: Indigenous Peoples in Popular Culture: Film, Television, and the News
- Critical Reflection 4

Week 4: May 24 - 30

May 26 – Indigenous Storytelling in Art & Comedy
Lecture: Indigenous Storytelling through Art & Comedy

Readings:

Media:
- Howells, L. Open Mic. [https://indigenouslandurbanstories.ca/portfolio-item/open-mic/](https://indigenouslandurbanstories.ca/portfolio-item/open-mic/)
- CBC, Meet the artists from the groundbreaking art show Insurgence/Resurgence [https://www.cbc.ca/arts/insurgenceresurgence](https://www.cbc.ca/arts/insurgenceresurgence)

Assessment:
- Circle Discussion 5: Indigenous Storytelling through Art & Comedy
- Critical Reflection 5

**Week 5: May 31 - June 6**

**May 31 – Resurgent Ceremonies and Cultural Practice**

Lecture: Indigenous Storytelling in Relationship with Land & Indigenous Food Systems

Readings:

Media

**June 2 – Resurgent Relationships with Land and Food Systems**
Media:

Readings

Assessment
- Circle Discussion 7: Indigenous Storytelling in Relationship with Land & Food Systems
- Homelands Photo Essay

**Week 6: June 7 - 13**

**June 8 – Indigenous Storytelling in Fashion**

Media: (No Lecture)
- Adrienne Keene, Native American Fashion https://youtu.be/Y3zlj2gbOo8

Readings:
- The Conversation: Indigenous Fashion Week Toronto is healing and resurgence in action https://bit.ly/2QowXdx

**June 10 – Indigenous Storytelling in Music**

Lecture: Indigenous Storytelling through Fashion and Music

Readings:
McMaster University, Indigenous Studies Program


Media
- Red Man Laughing – A Tribe Called Red Interview
  https://soundcloud.com/indianandcowboy/rml-a-tribe-called-red
- Humber College, Culture, Music, and Masculinity https://fb.watch/4TAXJqslq7/

Assessment
- Circle Discussion 6: Indigenous Storytelling in Fashion and Music
- Critical Reflection 6

Week 7: June 14 - 20

June 15 – Circle Discussion 8: Resurgent Narratives Presentations (Seminars 1 & 2) &

June 17 – Circle Discussion 9: Resurgent Narratives Presentations (Seminars 3 & 4)
- Critical Reflection 7 Due

Final Exam: June 21-25

June 24 – Circle Discussion 10: Closing Circle & End of Term Reflection

Course Policies

Submission of Assignments
All assignments are due on Avenue to Learn on the deadline outlined in the course syllabus.

Grades
Grades will be based on the McMaster University grading scale:

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<td>90-100</td>
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<td>85-90</td>
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<td>80-84</td>
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<td>70-72</td>
<td>B-</td>
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<tr>
<td>67-69</td>
<td>C+</td>
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Late Assignments, Absences, Missed Work, Illness
If, due to incapacitating illness, you are unable to complete any assignment on time, please contact me as soon as possible. Missed work may be accepted without penalties if the excuse is reasonable in the context of the assignment and overall coursework expectations.

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, user names 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, 2020 - 2021
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. It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty.

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. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, located at:

https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/university-policies-procedures-guidelines/

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.
AUTHENTICITY / PLAGIARISM DETECTION

Some courses may use a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal authenticity and ownership of student submitted work. For courses using such software, students will be expected to submit their work electronically either directly to Turnitin.com or via an online learning platform (e.g. Avenue to Learn, etc.) using plagiarism detection (a service supported by Turnitin.com) so it can be checked for academic dishonesty.

Students who do not wish their work to be submitted through the plagiarism detection software must inform the Instructor before the assignment is due. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to the plagiarism detection software. 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 details about McMaster’s use of Turnitin.com please go to www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity

COURSES WITH AN ON-LINE ELEMENT

Some courses may use on-line elements (e.g. e-mail, Avenue to Learn, LearnLink, web pages, capa, Moodle, ThinkingCap, etc.). Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of a course using these elements, private information such as first and last names, user names 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 a course that uses on-line elements will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

ONLINE PROCTORING

Some courses may use online proctoring software for tests and exams. This software may require students to turn on their video camera, present identification, monitor and record their computer activities, and/or lock/restrict their browser or other applications/software during tests or exams. This software may be required to be installed before the test/exam begins.

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.

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.

REQUESTS FOR RELIEF FOR MISSED ACADEMIC TERM WORK

McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF): 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”.

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 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.

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.
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, Avenue to Learn and/or McMaster email.

Academic Integrity Statement
You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behavior 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 behavior 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, located at www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity. The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:
1. Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one’s own or for which credit has been obtained.
2. Improper collaboration in group work.
3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

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.

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
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.