

Introduction to Indigenous Studies: Canadian Perspectives

INST 1101.005/69

WINTER 2020, 3 Credits, DEPARTMENT OF HUMANITIES, MOUNT ROYAL UNIVERSITY

Acknowledgement: I would like to acknowledge that Mount Royal University is on the traditional lands of the Niitsitapi, Blackfoot Confederacy which is comprised of the Siksika, the Piikani, the Kainai Nations, and the peoples of Treaty 7, which include the Tsuut'ina and the Stoney Nakoda First Nations. In addition, the City of Calgary is homeland to Metis Nation Region 3.

Instructor: Vicki Bouvier		Email: vbouvier@mtroyal.ca
Office Location: EA3141	Office Hours: Wednesday 2:00 pm – 3:30 pm or by appointment	Telephone: 403.440.7231

Course Format:

Days	Time	Room
Mondays and Wednesdays	11:30 am – 12:50pm	EB1109

Calendar Description:

This course provides an introduction to the interdisciplinary field of Indigenous Studies. Specifically, the course surveys the diverse histories and traditional and contemporary cultures of the various groups in what is now Canada. Taught from an Aboriginal perspective, the course explores a wide range of topics, with an emphasis on colonization and decolonization.

Course Description:

The image of Indigenous peoples in Canada is largely characterized as stereotypical and influenced by Canada's colonial history, and more recently, a general lack of awareness of Indigenous culture by mainstream society. This course invites students to explore and apply their understanding of the relationship between Canada's Indigenous population and mainstream culture through an in-depth process of self-reflection, historical and contemporary perspectives, overview of relevant literature, independent study, critical discussion and assignments that focus on cross-cultural understanding. In light of national policies such as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's 94 Calls to Action (TRC), it is vital that we challenge existing beliefs and understandings of the roles and contributions of Indigenous peoples to Canadian society from both a historical and contemporary perspective. In doing so, we move towards a shared vision that fosters cross-cultural sensitivity and respect for all cultures.

Learning Outcomes and Course Objectives:

Mount Royal has four course and program level outcomes to prepare its graduates for Work place success and a life of continuous learning: 1) Intellectual and Practical Skills, 2) Integrative and Applied Learning, 3) Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical, Natural

and Technological World, 4) and Personal and Social Responsibility. All courses offered at MRU emphasize one or more of these outcomes. This course focuses specifically on 3) knowledge of human cultures and 4) personal and social responsibility.

Students in this course will be invited to critically engage with literature, class discussion, written and oral assignments to reflect on, explore and demonstrate an understanding of:

- Foundational concepts of critical cross-cultural studies;
- Pre-colonial worldviews and belief systems of Indigenous peoples;
- Colonization and its impact on Indigenous peoples;
- Trace the history of Indigenous-Canadian relations
- Contemporary issues regarding Indigenous peoples;
- One's own positioning and relationship to the topics and issues related to Indigenous peoples.

Course Design and Delivery

This course is thematically organized around key historical events and contemporary issues as well as introduces students to foundational theoretical concepts that are central to engaging with topics across various cultures. Although I include materials from a broad range of geographic areas in Canada, I focus heavily on local region history. This course is delivered using a combination of lecture-style format, group dialogue/discussion, student-directed learning and presentations, film and video clips, and guest speakers (when available). I teach from a respectful, adult learning space that includes an emphasis on students' responsibility for their own learning. I will rely on students to direct and focus class discussions to meet their own learning needs. Students are expected to fully participate in every aspect of the course.

Classroom Policies:

We will be engaging in potentially sensitive and/or provocative issues. Therefore, the foundational objective of this course is to foster a safe and respectful physical, intellectual, emotional, and spiritual space for all students. I expect all students to demonstrate awareness of and respect for this.

Laptop and cell phone use is not permitted during class except classes which require a research component. You will be asked to leave if there is evidence you are using your devices for purposes that are not class related. If you are expecting an important call, please inform me prior to class start and arrangements can be made to minimize class disruptions. I will not tolerate, under any circumstances, students using class time for personal texting and/or accessing social media.

Readings:

There is no textbook for this class. Instead, readings will be listed and/or posted on Blackboard. The expectation is that you will access MRU library database to locate and download a copy of the required reading. As appropriate, I will upload a PDF to Blackboard if the reading is from a book chapter. Please ensure you have read required readings assigned for that class **prior to class start** and printed a copy for class use.

Communication, Emails, Blackboard and Website:

- I will be communicating via email. Check your MRU email regularly!
- Emails will be responded to within 24 hours during the week.
- All course information is posted through our Blackboard site. Check it regularly and let me know if you have any questions!
*** It is the responsibility of the student to ensure they have read the course outline, the assignment descriptions and assessments.
- Some components may include online discussion through the term, please ensure you know how to create and respond to threads.
- Please bring any needs to the professor to ensure your success in the class.
Communication regarding individual needs should be brought to the attention of the professor at the beginning of the term. Issues that are not made aware until the end of the term may not be able to be accommodated.
- Accessing the professor's office hours are highly encouraged.

Learning Assignments:

Learning Assignment	Due Date	Percent of final mark	Grouping for assignment
Spiritual Exchange #1 (Theme 1)	Feb 12th	20%	Group
Spiritual Exchange #2 (Theme 2)	March 18th	20%	Group
Spiritual Exchange #3 (Theme 3)	April 6th	20%	Group
Attendance	Entire course	10%	Individual
Participation	April 2nd	15%	Individual
Nest discussions	Assigned class date	15%	Individual
Total		100%	

Learning Assignment Submission Expectations:

- All assignments are to be submitted in Blackboard. Any submission after 11:59 pm MT is considered late.
- All written assignments will be handed in Word Document, double-spaced. (PDF's will not be accepted)
- All written assignments will adhere to APA citation format (paper formatting, citations, and referencing). This is crucial in order to avoid plagiarism.
- All assignments need to be saved and submitted in the following format:
assignment name_student first name_last name (for example – nest discussion 1_Victoria_Bouvier)

- It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that the assignment submission to Blackboard is in the proper file format. If the file is not readable, the assignment will not be marked. **it is important to double check the submission to ensure that it is accessible to the professor.

Late Assignment Policy

- Late submissions are only accepted if life circumstances or illness intervene in which case I may ask for documentation. I expect that you will respect my workload and deadlines. Please refer to the Academic Regulations for deferred work policy (<https://catalog.mtroyal.ca/content.php?catoid=17&navoid=1008>)
- If you do hand in a late assignment without a permitted extension, a loss of 3% for each business day [not class day] that the assignment is overdue. For example, an essay that receives an 80% will receive a 77% if one day late.

Learning Assignment Descriptions:

Attendance worth 10%

Because of the nature of the course and content we will be taking up, full engagement with all discussions, readings, relevant course material, presentations, guest speakers, etc., is expected. Full engagement is reliant on class attendance. This grade will be based on formal attendance during the entire course term. If you are late to class and after attendance has been taken, it is your responsibility to inform the professor that you are present.

Participation worth 15%

Participation is crucial in the learning process and for the ability to acquire a deeper level of understanding of the course content. Participation includes, but is not limited to: being prepared; completing the course readings prior to class including taking notes of the readings; taking notes during class discussion, contributing to the class discussion, asking questions for clarification – during and outside of class, seeking out professor assistance, seeking out peers for assistance, helping peers with course understandings, communicating effectively with groups and partners. Participation will be assessed based on quality rather than just quantity. Please keep in mind that you cannot participate if you are not present.

Your participation will be graded on the following five areas:

- 1) Class contributions (i.e. in class discussions and online discussions, student is engaged and attentive in class, expands on ideas in class, open to new perspectives and understandings; open to be reflective);
- 2) Nest discussions (i.e. student is engaged in the discussions, expands on ideas, open to new perspectives and understandings);

- 3) Fostering classroom community (i.e. supporting peer learning, coming to class prepared, building rapport with students and professor);
- 4) Respect for ethical space and class values (i.e. arriving on time, respect classroom rules, supporting others learning, thoughtful and respectful responses).
- 5) Student provides a narrative of how they contributed meaningfully to the class.

Assessment:

This assignment will be a self-graded assessment. At the end of the term, you will fill out an assessment to determine the grade that you think and feel you deserve included with a justification for the grade. The professor will look over the assessment and will verify the grade or suggest an alternate grade based on observations and assessments over the term. This grade is based on the **level and quality of participation and contribution to the class**. The rubric will be provided in a separate document.

Nest Group Discussions – worth 15%

Each week, students will be responsible for leading a group discussion based on the course material assigned for the week. This student will be responsible for asking critical questions and leading the group discussion. The grade will be assigned based on the quality of the discussion, preparation, and guiding questions posed. A student will receive a zero if he/she is absent and/or has not come prepared for the leadership discussion.

A document will be provided that outlines the assignment expectations and guidelines (see Nest Discussion Guidelines on Blackboard).

Depending on the group sizes, students may be required to lead more than one discussion in a term.

The nest group schedule will be determined in class.

Guidelines:

I will be looking for evidence that effectively demonstrates that you have read the article and have engaged with the material on a deeper level. Thus, for your discussion, please include:

- a) Summary - A brief overview of the material which identifies the key points of the reading.
- b) What did you learn?
- c) What challenged you? What did you struggle with? And why? What do you think and feel?
- d) Questions to promote a healthy and ethical dialogue – questions need to be open-ended and respectful. They need to be able to open up a discussion for further learning and insight.

Discussion time allotment (15-20 mins) – make sure you provide time for discussion (i.e. 2-3 mins summary, 12-18 discussion). **Please ensure that your summary does not take up the whole time for discussion. The point of this is to have a group discussion!**

Keep in mind that the goal of this assignment is to foster dialogue with each member of the nest group. It is the leader's responsibility to ensure that each member has a voice and is able to contribute, when fitting, to the discussion. The professor will provide guidelines on how to facilitate a discussion in the nest groups.

Spiritual Exchanges – (3) worth 20% each

These spiritual exchanges are situated within the ability for students to critically understand themselves, each other, the course objectives, material, and discussions and to see that learning is directly connected to our lives. The basis of understanding Indigenous studies is based on knowing who we are, how we understand history, knowing what we have been taught, why we have been taught certain items, and not others, knowing how we see power and privilege, how we contribute to colonialism, and what are responsibilities to ourselves, community, and environment.

The exchange is designed to engage students in collaborative dialogue that will lead to a deeper nuanced understanding of the content and relationship with the learning both in and outside of the classroom.

Each exchange will require students to work in pairs or groups of 3 to submit **one** collaborative dialogical exchange based on theme that was covered in class (1) Foundational Learning & Indigenous knowledge; 2) Colonialization; 3) Surgence and Resilience.

This assignment requires you to observe the course learnings, discussions, and material in your **everyday lived experiences**. The exchange will begin with a photograph that you capture as you are moving through your daily lives that prompts you to think about your learnings from the class teachings/content and reflect on how that moment in your experience relates to the course. The question to ask yourself is – **Where am I seeing the course learning in my daily life**

Steps:

- 1) The first student will begin by taking one photo in their everyday life, that relates to the course. The student will then write a coinciding response with the photograph (length 2-2 ½ pages double spaced).
- 2) The first student will send their response to your peer in your group to respond to.
- 3) The second student will continue on the exchange by responding the previous students' response. Then they will take and add their own photo that relates to the course. The student will then write a coinciding response with the photograph (length 2-2 ½ pages double spaced).
- 4) If there is a third student, the process will continue. If there is only two, then the exchange is submitted by the due date.
- 5) The student who started the first exchange will begin the second and third rounds and the same order will be followed and submitted by the due date assigned.

Each student's exchange is **required** to include:

- photo
 - reference to one reading from the theme
 - class discussions
 - connection to your everyday lived experiences with reflection.
 - Responses to your peers' thoughts/feelings/learning
- The first exchange needs to include a brief introduction to who you are, where you're from, how do you position yourself in this learning from each student.
 - The last exchange needs to include a conclusion and a summary of the learning that you have had together.
 - Before submitting, each member should proof read the exchange to ensure citations, grammar, and formatting is correct.
 - **A sample Spiritual Exchange will be posted on Blackboard.

Group Dynamics

- Group work can be beneficial and a great process to learn about ourselves and others. However, group work can also be very stressful if members are not committed to the assignment and ensuring the completion is on time and high quality.
- Members are responsible for committing to work together outside of class and accommodating each other's schedule.
- Each group member is required to have equal time to complete their round of the exchange; a schedule should be set by the group.
- If group members are not adhering to the timeline and are not cooperating to ensure that the assignments are completed with quality and timeliness, group members can request to leave the group.
 - If a group member wishes to leave the group, they need a justified reason which needs to be articulated to the professor.
 - If a group member requests to leave a group, the student needs to have shown that they have tried to work with the other members to ensure the completion of the assignment.
 - The group member needs to communicate to the group that they are leaving.
 - The group member needs to be prepared to complete the assignment on their own or have another group to complete with.

The spiritual exchange will be assessed on the following areas (see also assignment guidelines document in Blackboard):

- 1) Who am I?
- 2) What have I learned?
 - a. Class source
- 3) How am I relating to the learning?
 - a. What are you seeing, feeling, hearing, thinking from the learning?
- 4) How am I challenged by the learning? What am I struggling with?
- 5) How does this inform who I am?
- 6) How does this inform who I am responsible to and why? What are my responsibilities?
- 7) Sources and references

Grades:

Mark (%)	95-100	85-94	80-84	77-79	73-76	70-72	67-69	63-66	60-62	55-59	50-54	0-49
Grade	A+	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	F
GPA	4.0	4.0	3.7	3.3	3.0	2.7	2.3	2.0	1.7	1.3	1.0	0
Description from Policy 507, Grades and Examinations	Excellent . Superior performance, showing comprehensive understanding of subject matter.			Good. Clearly above average performance with knowledge of the subject matter generally complete.			Satisfactory. Basic understanding of the subject matter.			Marginal performance. (Generally insufficient preparation for subsequent courses).		Fail. Assigned to students: a)who do not meet the academic requirements of the course, or b)who cease to continue in the course, but do not withdraw as per MRU policy.

Indigenous Studies Website

Indigenous Studies has a website - <http://blogs.mtroyal.ca/inst/>. Check it out for news about courses, program requirements, and current events.

Library and Citation Assistance

Jessie Loyer, subject librarian for Indigenous studies, can answer questions and meet with you individually to help answer questions about research, sources, citations, and many other topics. She can be reached at jloyer@mtroyal.ca.

Student Services, Accessibility, and Accommodation

Student Support Services

Iniskim Centre

The Iniskim Centre offers a wide range of support services from counseling and tutoring to spiritual support and writing help for First Nations, Inuit, and Métis students.

<http://www.mtroyal.ca/ProgramsCourses/FacultiesSchoolsCentres/IniskimCentre/>

Learning Services

Take charge of your learning by working with Writing and Learning Strategists, Learning Peers, and Mentors. Develop stronger studying and writing skills, work toward a better understanding of course content, and connect with mentors to help you succeed at university and beyond. More about Writing and Learning Writing and Learning Strategists can help you with writing, learning, time

management, planning a presentation, academic reading strategies, exam preparation strategies, organizing ideas, editing techniques, and more.

Appointments are free of charge and can be booked online (through MyMRU), by phone, or in person. Workshops are also offered for a variety of popular topics – find the schedule at mru.ca/slsworkshops. Students can receive additional support and training through workshops, tutoring, and other

resources offered by Learning Services (see

<http://www.mtroyal.ca/AcademicSupport/ResourcesServices/StudentLearningServices/index.htm>) and by Student Counselling Services (see <http://www.mtroyal.ca/CampusServices/WellnessServices/StudentCounselling/index.htm>).

Accessibility Services

If you are a student with an Academic Accommodation Memo and Professor Acknowledgement form from Accessibility Services, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations in a private and confidential setting. Request to review and sign academic accommodation documents should not be made during or between classes. If you are a student experiencing a disability who may require academic accommodation and have not yet registered with Accessibility Services, please contact their office at 403 440 6868. You must be registered with Accessibility Services to access academic accommodations. If you require academic accommodations for a reason other than disability, please make an appointment with me to discuss or contact Diversity & Human Rights Services at 403 440 5956. Please consult [\[www.mtroyal.ca/AcademicSupport/ResourcesServices/StudentLearningServices/AccessibilityServices/index.htm\]\(http://www.mtroyal.ca/AcademicSupport/ResourcesServices/StudentLearningServices/AccessibilityServices/index.htm\) or ask me for more information.](http://</p></div><div data-bbox=)

Your Mental Health

Feeling stressed, anxious, sad, overwhelmed, alone, or sick and achy? Finding it hard to be motivated, meet deadlines or attend class? Having a hard time sleeping, concentrating or retaining information no matter how much you study? Help is available! See MRU's Mental Health Website for all resources.

<http://www.mtroyal.ca/CampusServices/WellnessServices/MentalHealth/index.htm>

Dating, Domestic and Sexual Violence

You are encouraged to find general information on healthy relationships and dating, domestic and sexual violence as well as information on how these issues are addressed at Mount Royal University. See MRU's Dating, Domestic and Sexual Violence Website.

Academic Dishonesty

From the Mount Royal Code of Student Conduct:

“*Academic Dishonesty* broadly defined, is the giving, taking or presenting of information or material that unethically or dishonestly aids an individual or group in the determination of academic merit. Common examples include, but are not limited to, *Plagiarism* and *Cheating*. For greater clarity,

(a) *plagiarism* occurs when an individual submits:

- (i) the words, ideas, images or data of any other person as his/her own in any academic work which is a component of a course or program of study at Mount Royal;
 - (ii) information or data which have been altered or contrived in any way that is intended to mislead; and/or
 - (iii) work which includes misleading references to material or references that do not accurately reflect the sources used by the individual.
- (b) *cheating* occurs when a student or group of students dishonestly attempt to gain an unfair advantage over other students.

All assignments containing plagiarized passages (intentional or accidental) will receive a grade of zero and will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct. For more information go to www.mtroyal.ca/codeofstudentconduct

Weekly Course Schedule

The course schedule will be available online and is subject to change according to the needs of the instructor and students.