

**CANADIAN SCHOOL OF PEACEBUILDING  
CANADIAN MENNONITE UNIVERSITY**

**June 1-5, 2020**

**PCTS/IDS/POLS-3950C - Reconciling Stories: Indigenous Laws & Lands  
Undergraduate Course Syllabus**

Instructor: Niigaan James Sinclair

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Lecture times: 9:00am-12pm & 1:00pm-4 pm, Monday to Friday

Office hours: After class & by appointment

Last date for voluntary withdrawal without academic penalty: **July 15, 2020**

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### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course introduces participants to narratives of Indigenous laws and lands and how Indigenous peoples have used story, song, and oral and written expressions to articulate epistemologies, resistance, and record their histories, rights and responsibilities to themselves and others. Issues in the course will include the impact of colonization and globalization on Indigenous peoples of Canada and the role of social justice movements nationally and internationally in historical and contemporary struggles for recognition of sovereignty and resistance to theft of lands and resources. Participants will study Indigenous traditional and contemporary literatures (specifically graphic texts and novels), Indigenous critical theory, and devise responses and presentations based on their impressions and ideas.

### **OBJECTIVES**

**After successful completion of this course students should have:**

1. Examine the political, social, economic and cultural impacts of colonization and globalization from an Indigenous peoples' perspective, using Canada as a case study;
2. Identify and describe Indigenous rights and documents defining those rights, using Canadian law as a case study;
3. Identify and describe Indigenous literatures and literary production as it both critiques and conceives of Indigenous sovereignty and self-determination; and,
4. Assess the relationship between literature, art, and activism in Indigenous politics and examine "reconciliation" as a concept for political change

### **REQUIRED TEXTBOOK AND READING**

**It is the participant's responsibility to order texts ahead of time, whether online, as e-books, or from local book-sellers.**

McKay, Laura, ed. *This Place: 150 Years Retold*. Winnipeg: Highwater Press. 2019.

All other readings will be available online or provided as a PDF in the course Dropbox.

### TEACHING APPROACH

The course is a seminar in which the discussions of the assigned daily readings form the core. There will also be in-class activities such as small group discussions, close readings and analysis, as well as completing short class presentations based on assigned readings/projects. Students will be expected to keep up with readings and actively engage in-class activities.

### COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND DEADLINES (for credit)

The following are the general outlines of requirements for those taking the class for credit. Others are encouraged to read as much as possible, however, in order to receive maximum benefit from the course. Assignments are due as scheduled.

Marks will be deducted for lateness (2% per day including weekends), unless previous arrangements have been made with the instructor prior to the due date. Supporting documentation will be required before any extension is granted. Late assignments should be submitted via email directly to the instructor.

### ASSIGNMENT SUMMARY

ASSIGNMENT	DUE DATE	VALUE
1. UNDRIP & Me	June 1	15%
2. Participation and Attendance	On-going	20%
3. Oral Presentation	June 12	15%
4. Final Research Paper	August 1	50%

### ASSIGNMENT GUIDELINES

#### 1. UNDRIP & Me assignment

Due: June 1 (first class)

Length: 1000-1500 words

Value: 15%

Description: Students will read the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and *Understanding the Implementing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples: An Introductory Handbook* and will choose 1-2 articles from the Declaration and explore the following in a short paper answering the following questions:

- What is the article's purpose and how might it be applied in your country?
- What is the experience of Indigenous peoples in your country in relation to the article (in other words: why is it necessary to implement)?
- How would the implementation of this article impact your life?
- How would your country change as a result of implementing this article?

Students must be prepared to briefly introduce their papers at the first class.

#### 2. Participation and attendance

Due: On-going

Value: 20%

Description: See attendance requirement below, under “Attendance,” and a breakdown of the participation grade under “Evaluation.” The breakdown of the participation mark is as follows:

**A to A+:** Contributed frequently and appropriately to discussions; demonstrated critical understanding of assigned readings; applied relevant material from readings and lectures to the issue; built on the comments of others. Demonstrated active listening and brought in weekly commentary on the readings, news articles or current event.

**B to B+:** Contributed regularly; demonstrated understanding of main points of readings; occasionally employed relevant materials from readings and lectures to the issue; offered observations but did not integrate or build on other's contributions.

**C to C+:** Contributed a few times; demonstrated having read assigned material; employed some theory in understanding issues; made statements unconnected to main subject or repeated comments already offered.

**D:** Was present but contributed minimally to discussion; little demonstration of having read or applied reading assignments; offered comments which did not advance discussion of the issues.

**F:** Did not attend regularly or at all.

### **3. Oral presentation (Graduate students – individual, Undergraduate students – pairs)**

Due: June 12 (last class)

Length: 15 minutes

Value: 15%

Description: In a prepared presentation for 15 minutes, students will offer a critical reading of one of the stories from *This Place*, considering the issues of Indigenous rights, representation, and resistance we have been discussing. Strong emphasis should be made to connect the story to the readings for the course. A critical reading of a text situates the work in a conversation and context – it identifies ways in which one or more culture(s), time(s), place(s), politic(s), and community(ies) reside in the expression. You will then inter-relate these with the broader themes developed throughout the course (please draw connections to other things we have read and discussed in class). A critical reading usually accompanies more of the artist's other work and any other related material (such as a governmental policy, a piece of art, or a traditional story – to name a few possibilities). A critical reading also gestures to scholarship and research done on the artist and suggests ways in which others have seen the work. This presentation must accompany ***one of two things***, handed in on completion:

- Powerpoint presentation (with bibliography)
- Handout (with bibliography)

Students must also be prepared to answer questions from their classmates following their presentation.

### **4. Final research paper**

Due: by August 1, 2020 (earlier is encouraged!)

Length: 15-20 pages; 12-point font (Times New Roman)

Value: 50%

Description: The final research paper allows students to deepen their understanding of a course topic that interests them and write a paper on it. Students choose an issue relating to the course content to write a

research paper. The research paper can be either a case study (focusing on particular Indigenous people(s) and/or issue) or a more conceptual/theoretical consideration.

### **STYLISTIC REQUIREMENTS**

CMU has adopted the following as its standard guide for all academic writing:

Hacker, Diana. *A Pocket Style Manual*. Sixth edition. Boston and New York: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2012.

The final paper should follow an accepted academic format for citations, bibliography, etc. (e.g. APA, Chicago, MLA). You may choose the format but whichever you use, be sure to use it properly and consistently. Format: 1-inch margins, Times New Roman font, double-spaced. Submit as Word file.

### **OTHER REQUIREMENTS**

*Academic Integrity*—All material referred to in any assignment MUST be appropriately referenced.

Plagiarism is a serious matter. Students should be aware of CMU Academic Policies, particularly those regarding academic misconduct (plagiarism and cheating), which apply to all University courses. These are detailed on CMU's website (<http://www.cmu.ca/students.php?s=registrar&p=policies>) and in the CMU Calendar. If you still have questions about appropriate referencing and what plagiarism is, a useful tutorial can be found here: <http://www.indiana.edu/~istd/>.

*Attendance*—In order to maximize the potential of the educational process, and given the intensive nature of CSOP courses, it is necessary that each student attend all classes. On occasion, a student may need to miss some class time. A half-day of class (4 total hours) is the maximum allowable absence, and any student missing more than this may be barred from further class attendance. In such cases the student is responsible to advise the instructor before the class occurs. It is the responsibility of the student to become familiar with all academic policies, including those pertaining to attendance, academic misconduct, and grading.

### **ACCESSIBILITY**

CMU strives to provide a fair and supportive learning environment for academically qualified students with disabilities. If you are eligible for these services or have questions about becoming eligible, please contact Sandra Loeppky, Coordinator of Accessibility Programs at [sloepky@cmu.ca](mailto:sloepky@cmu.ca) or 204.487.3300 x.340.

In recognition of individuals with asthma, allergies and severe environmental/chemical sensitivities, CMU is striving to become a scent-free campus. Students, staff and guests are asked to refrain from wearing fragrances and scented personal care products at CMU. This includes perfumes, colognes, aftershave and scented hair products. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated by those affected.

### **EVALUATION**

Good communication skills are essential for justice and peacebuilding work. Thus, in general, instructors should look for quality writing that adheres to the assignment guidelines, expresses ideas clearly, concisely, and persuasively, and demonstrates engagement with readings and class sessions. All written work should be well informed, well organized and well documented.

Students to take up any concerns or questions regarding grades first with the instructor. If this does not produce a satisfactory result, the student should submit a written appeal to the Registrar ([spenner@cmu.ca](mailto:spenner@cmu.ca)).

**NOTE:** Grades are not final until vetted and approved by the Dean's Office.

For more information on CMU policies regarding grades, academic misconduct, appeals, and other matters, please see the *CMU Student Handbook*.

#### LETTER GRADE/PERCENTAGE SCALE

Letter Grade	Percentage	Grade Points	Descriptor
A+	90-100	4.5	Exceptional
A	80-89	4	Excellent
B+	75-79	3.5	Very Good
B	70-74	3	Good
C+	65-69	2.5	Satisfactory
C	60-64	2	Adequate
D	50-59	1	Marginal
F	0-49	0	Failure

<u>Criteria</u>	<b>A - Excellent</b>	<b>B - Competent</b>	<b>C - Below Expectations</b>
<b>CONTENT</b> (quality of the information/ideas and sources/details used to support them)	- has clarity of purpose - has depth of content - displays insight or originality of thought - demonstrates quality and breadth of resources	- has clarity of purpose - has substantial information and sufficient support - contains some originality of thought - uses quality resources	- has clarity of purpose - lacks depth of content and may depend on generalities or the commonplace - has little originality of thought - uses mostly quality resources
<b>STRUCTURE</b> (logical order or sequence of the writing)	- is coherent and logically developed - uses very effective transitions	- is coherent and logically developed - uses smooth transitions	- is coherent and logically (but not fully) developed - has some awkward transitions
<b>CONVENTIONS</b> (appearance of the writing: sentence structure, usage, mechanics, documentation)	- has virtually no errors of conventions	- has minimal errors of conventions	- is understandable <u>but</u> has noticeable problems of sentence structure, usage, mechanics or documentation

<b>STYLE</b> (personality of the writing: word choice, sentence variety, voice, attention to audience)	- is concise, eloquent and rhetorically effective -has nicely varied sentence structure -is engaging throughout and enjoyable to read	- displays concern for careful expression -has some variation in sentence structure -is generally enjoyable to read	- has some personality <u>but</u> lacks imagination and may be stilted and may rely on clichés -has little variation in sentence structure -is not very interesting to read
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## EXTENSIONS

The last date within the semester an instructor can grant as an extension is AUG 15. If a student is unable to complete the requirements of a course by this date, the student must submit a written appeal for an “incomplete” to the Registrar’s office ([spenner@cmu.ca](mailto:spenner@cmu.ca)). The student should seek the instructor’s support for the appeal and must submit it by AUG 16.

If the student’s appeal is granted, the instructor will enter a grade of I (for incomplete) accompanied by a temporary grade (which is based on completed work and assigns a value of zero for uncompleted work). Instructor grades are due by AUG 21. If the student completes the remaining work within the extension period, the grade will be recalculated and the incomplete status will be removed. If the student does not complete the work within the extension period, the incomplete status will be removed and the provisional grade entered alongside the “incomplete” will become the final grade. The maximum extension for courses ending in August is DEC 1.

## SCHEDULE, TOPICS & READINGS (links provided or \*PDFs in Dropbox)

This schedule, along with assigned readings, may be adjusted slightly in response to pace of discussion, availability of guests, and other scheduling issues. The instructor will provide advance notice of any changes.

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
9:00 am – 10:30 am	Indigenous Rights and Canada’s History	Gifting as Law in Indigenous cultures	Indigenous (mis-) Recognitions and Sovereignties	Indigenous Rights in Canada	Reconciliation I
10:45 am – 12:00 pm	The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples	Introduction to Graphic Novels	UNDRIP (mis-) Implementation in Canada	Indigenous Resistance, Representation and Re-representation	Reconciliation II
12– 1 pm	L	U	N	C	H

1:00 pm – 2:30 pm	Student presentations on UNDRIP	Student group / individual presentation meetings	Student presentations on <i>This Place</i>	Student presentations on <i>This Place</i>	Student presentations on <i>This Place</i>
2:45 pm – 4:00 pm	Indigenous Literatures and Gifting	Discussion on “Warrior Nation” in <i>This Place</i>	Discussion & Presentation Reflection	Discussion and Presentation Reflection	Class Wrap-up and Feedback

### Monday readings

- UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, available online at: [http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/DRIPS\\_en.pdf](http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/DRIPS_en.pdf)
- Understanding the Implementing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples: An Introductory Handbook, available online at: [https://www.indigenousbar.ca/pdf/undrip\\_handbook.pdf](https://www.indigenousbar.ca/pdf/undrip_handbook.pdf)
- “Understanding Comics” by Scott McCloud, available online at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fXYckRgsdJI>

### Tuesday readings

- *This Place: 150 Years Retold*
- \* “Drawn to Change: Comics and Critical Consciousness” by Sean Carleton
- \* “Power in the Anishinaabeg World” from *Ogiimaag: Anishinaabeg Leadership, 1760-1845* by Cary Miller
- \* “The Gift” in *Reshaping the University: Responsibility, Indigenous Epistemes, and the Logic of the Gift* by Rauna Kuokkanen

### Wednesday readings

- \* *The Internalization of Indigenous Rights: UNDRIP in the Canadian Context*, pages 1-42
- \* “Subjects of Empire: Indigenous Peoples and the “Politics of Recognition in Canada” by Glen Coulthard
- \* “Nishnaabeg Resurgence: Stories from Within” by Leanne Simpson

### Thursday readings

- \* *The Internalization of Indigenous Rights: UNDRIP in the Canadian Context*, pages 43-72
- \* “Indian Love Call” by Drew Hayden Taylor in *Learn, Teach, Challenge*, edited by Deanna Reder and Linda Morra (pages 129-137)
- \* “‘Introduction’ and ‘Marketing the Imaginary Indian’” by Daniel Francis in *Learn, Teach, Challenge*, edited by Deanna Reder and Linda Morra (pages 139-153)
- \* “Postindian Warriors” by Gerald Vizenor in *Learn, Teach, Challenge*, edited by Deanna Reder and Linda Morra (pages 155-167)

- \**“Postcolonial Ghost Dancing: Diagnosing European Colonialism”* by James (Sakej) Youngblood Henderson in *Learn, Teach, Challenge*, edited by Deanna Reder and Linda Morra (pages 169-189)

### **Friday readings**

- \*The 94 Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission
- \**“Gdi-newninaa”* by Leanne Simpson in *Learn, Teach, Challenge*, edited by Deanna Reder and Linda Morra (pages 289-300)
- \**“Indigenous Storytelling, Truth-telling, and Community Approaches to Reconciliation”* by Jeff Corntassel in *Learn, Teach, Challenge*, edited by Deanna Reder and Linda Morra (pages 373-391)
- \**“Doubleweaving Two-Spirit Critiques: Building Alliances Between Native and Queer Studies”* by Qwo-Li Driskill in *Learn, Teach, Challenge*, edited by Deanna Reder and Linda Morra (pages 401-422)
- \**“Finding Your Voice: Cultural Resurgence and Power in Political Movement”* by Katsisorokwas Curran Jacobs in *Learn, Teach, Challenge*, edited by Deanna Reder and Linda Morra (pages 423-428)
- \**“From haa-huu-pah to the Decolonization Imperative: Responding to Contemporary Issues through the TRC”* by Laura Moss in *Learn, Teach, Challenge*, edited by Deanna Reder and Linda Morra (pages 429-437)

### **SCHEDULE NOTES**

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| July 15 | The final date to withdraw from the course without academic penalty.                                 |
| Aug 15  | Instructors cannot grant extensions past this date.  |
| Aug 16  | The last day for students to appeal in writing to the Registrar’s office for extensions past Aug 15. |
| Aug 21  | Last day for instructors to submit grades.   |