

**History/ Indigenous Studies 4818 G**  
**Indigenous Peoples and Public History**  
**Winter 2025**

Lecture Thursday 2:30- 5:30

Instructor: Dr. Cody Groat

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Office: Department of History, Lawson Hall 2224

Office Hours: Monday 12:30- 2:00

**This is a draft outline. Please see the course site on OWL Brightspace for a final version.**

**Course Description**

This course will explore Canadian public history as it relates to Indigenous peoples. Aspects of public history that will be considered include the erection and contestation of statues and monuments, the recognition of cultural landscapes, acts of public performance, and the repatriation (return) of ancestral remains. This course will consider theoretical frameworks associated with the practice of public history as well as Indigenous responses to the field, including protests, assertions of intellectual property, and critiques of the divides between 'culture' and 'nature.' Case studies will range from the poetry of Pauline Johnson and the Canadian Pavilion at Expo 67, to the *Marvel Cinematic Universe* creating Kahhori, a superhero from the Haudenosaunee Confederacy.

**Prerequisite(s):** Registration in third or fourth year Indigenous Studies with a minimum 70% average, or 1.0 History courses at the 2200 level or above

**Antirequisite(s):** History 4296G or Indigenous Studies 4001G if either were taken in 2021- 22

**Course Level Learning Outcomes**

- Understand international and domestic theories associated with Public History
- Articulate the ways in which interpretations of the past can influence public policy
- Recognize significant reforms associated with Indigenous peoples within the museum sector, the management of historic sites, and the public display of cultural practices

**Absences and Late Assignments** – Students must attend at least nine lectures in order to pass this course. A three-day extension is permitted for the Discussion Leadership Reflection and the Joseph Brant Statue Essay. After this extension, there will be a 2% late penalty for every day that the assignment has not been handed in, with a maximum deduction of 20%. The National Historic Person Essay has a firm deadline of April 3 at 11:59pm. Students are required

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to submit formal documentation to Academic Counselling in order to receive an extension for the final project.

**Course Material** – Course materials will be available through OWL or the university library. No additional purchases are necessary.

## **Methods of Evaluation**

### **Discussion Participation** (ongoing) – 15%

This is a participatory, discussion-based class. Active and consistent engagement constitutes 15% of the final grade. Participation is evaluated between Weeks 2- 11. Attendance at a minimum of nine lectures is necessary to earn a passing grade for this course.

### **Discussion Leadership** (ongoing) – 15%

Two discussion leaders will be assigned for each lecture between Weeks 2- 11. The professor will briefly introduce the themes that are being discussed and some relevant public history examples. This will be followed by presentations from the discussion leaders reflecting the assigned readings. The discussion leaders will be responsible for developing questions for their classmates and for moderating the subsequent conversations. Though it is not necessary, it is highly recommended that the discussion leaders collaborate with each other to divide the content amongst themselves. The discussion leaders will have access to the professors' slides at least one week before their presentation.

Each discussion leader will be responsible for writing a 3-page reflection paper that is due one week after their assigned class. This will provide a summary of the readings as well as commentary regarding discussion leadership and the comments that were shared by other classmates. The 15% allocated for the discussion leadership grade will be divided between the in-class leadership (5%) and the written reflection (10%).

### **Joseph Brant Statue Essay** (February 13) – 35%

Contentious statues and monuments have increasingly been removed from public places in the 2020s. Despite this, statues of Joseph Brant from the Kanyen'kehaka (Mohawk) Nation remain standing in both Brantford and Ottawa. Brant has been recognized as an influential Indigenous diplomat, but he was also the 'owner' of enslaved Black people including Sophia Burthen Pooley.

Students will prepare an essay that recommends a strategy for the future of the Joseph Brant monuments. This should consider the lived experiences of Joseph Brant, those whom he enslaved, and international efforts to remove contentious monuments. It is expected that students will argue in favour of a specific recommendation, which could range from removal to retention.

This assignment will be ten pages long, double spaced, with Chicago Style citations. It will cite at least five *peer reviewed* secondary sources.

### **National Historic Person Essay** (April 3) – 35%

The Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada was created in 1919 to provide official recommendations to the Government of Canada on the designation of national historic sites,

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people, and events. As of 2023, 734 people had been recognized as being nationally significant. The majority of these people were non-Indigenous.

Students will prepare an essay that recommends a First Nations, Inuit, or Métis person for commemoration as being nationally significant by the Government of Canada. The person must be deceased to allow for a comprehensive historical analysis of their lifelong contributions. Students should articulate why their chosen individual was nationally significant in relation to the historical development of Canada as a country. It is important to recognize that many Indigenous people have actively challenged or contested the legitimacy of Canada as a country. This can be considered when writing your recommendation, as students can argue why their chosen individual challenges the conventional interpretations of Canadian history. It is expected that this essay will be more comprehensive than a biography of your chosen person, as students are expected to consider the ways that publicly commemorating an individual reflects the overall values of society.

This assignment will be ten pages long, double spaced, with Chicago Style citations. It will cite at least six *peer reviewed* secondary sources.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Weekly Theme</b>	<b>Assigned Reading</b>
January 9	What Is Public History?	David Neufeld, "Ethics in the Practice of Public History with Aboriginal Communities," <i>The Public Historian</i> 28, 1 (2006): 117- 121
January 16	Statues and Monuments	Brian Murphy and Katie Owens-Murphy, "Public History in the Age of Insurrection: Confronting White Rage in Red States," <i>The Public Historian</i> 44, 3 (2022): 139- 163  Jean M. O'Brien and Lisa Blee, "What is a Monument to Massasoit Doing in Kansas City? The Memory Work of Monuments and Place in Public Displays of History," <i>Ethnohistory</i> 61, 4 (2014): 635- 653
January 23	Museums and Cultural Centres	Readings TBD
January 30	Repatriation	Readings TBD
February 6	Historic Sites	Matthew J. Hill, "Historicizing the 'Shrine of Democracy:' Lakota Perspectives on Mount Rushmore in the Context of the Black Hills" in <i>National Parks, Native Sovereignty: Experiments in Collaboration</i> edited by Christina Gish Hill, Matthew J.

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		<p>Hill and Brooke Neely, 122- 141. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2024</p> <p>Michael Lee Ross, <i>First Nations Sacred Sites in Canada's Courts</i>. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2005: 153- 170</p>
February 13	Television and Movies	Readings TBD
February 20	No Class	No Readings
February 27	Literature and Stage	<p>Veronica Strong-Boag and Carole Gerson, <i>Paddling Her Own Canoe: the Times and Texts of E. Pauline Johnson (Tekahionwake)</i>. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000: 100- 134</p> <p>Chapter from <i>Reconsidering Laura Ingalls Wilder: Little House and Beyond</i>, edited by Miranda A. Green-Barteet and Anne K. Phillips. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2019.</p>
March 6	School Textbooks	Readings TBD
March 13	Environmental Landscapes	Readings TBD
March 20	Cultural Practices	Readings TBD
March 27	Activism and Public Performance	Readings TBD
April 3	What Is Public History?	No readings

**Use of Generative AI Tools** – Students *are not* allowed to make use of Generative AI Tools such as ChatGPT for any assignments in this course.

**Additional Policies** – Please review the Department of History's shared policies and statements for all undergraduate courses at:  
[https://history.uwo.ca/undergraduate/program\\_module\\_information/policies.html](https://history.uwo.ca/undergraduate/program_module_information/policies.html) for important information regarding accessibility options, make-up exams, medical accommodations, health and wellness, academic integrity, plagiarism, and more.