

Indigenous Studies Program

IS/GEOG 2412F, Indigenous Health and Healthcare Environments

BRIEF COURSE OUTLINE

Fall 2025

Date: June 23, 2025

Instructor and course information:

Instructor: Dr. Vanessa Ambtman-Smith

Method of delivery: In - person

Credit value: 0.5

Antirequisites: None.

Prerequisites: None.

Please ensure you have the correct requisites by checking [the Academic Calendar](#).

Course Description:

This course examines how colonization and structural determinants have shaped Indigenous health within healthcare environments like hospitals. Students will explore contemporary Indigenous health through the lens of colonial disruption while positioning healthcare spaces as sites for reconciliation. The course integrates multiple perspectives—from clinical viewpoints to patient experiences and traditional knowledge keepers—using decolonizing, critical theory to analyze Indigenous health geography. Through readings, case studies, and personal reflection, students develop critical thinking skills while examining how to create more equitable healthcare spaces, practices, and policies for Indigenous peoples.

Course Materials:

Greenwood, M., Leeuw, D. S., Stout, R., Larstone, R., & Sutherland, J. (2023). Introduction to determinants of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples' Health in Canada. Canadian Scholars.

Students are welcome to purchase second-hand or earlier editions of this textbook.

Additional required readings will be available through the Course Readings tool on the course site

Evaluation:

Format 1 (Descriptive):

- **In-class Discussion Activities and Reflections** (6 activities scheduled throughout the term in weeks 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, with lowest score dropped; written reflections due end of day Thursdays)
- **Proposal for Final Project** (written format max. 300 words or video format; due end of Week 3)
- **Oral Presentation** (5-minute presentation on contemporary Indigenous health/healing place; present in-class on Week 6 or pre-recorded)
- **Story-telling Assignment** (700–800-word story on course-relevant topic with basic research; multiple format options including poster, op-ed, video, or art piece; due end of Week 9)

- **Final Project** (choice between meaning making assignment or traditional 2500-word essay; includes 3-page written reflection and minimum 5 scholarly sources; due end of Week 12)

Format 2 (Percentage Breakdown):

- In-class Discussion Activities & Reflections (4 of 5 counted): **20%**
- Proposal for Final Project: **5%**
- Oral Presentation: **15%**
- Story-telling Assignment: **20%**
- Final Project (Meaning Making/Essay): **40%**

Total: 100%

Key Notes:

- Built-in flexibility with 72-hour extension window for most assignments
- Only the Final Project requires formal supporting documentation for academic consideration
- Course emphasizes multiple assessment formats to accommodate different learning styles and cultural approaches to knowledge sharing

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