



The University of Western Ontario
Course Outline 3140F
Indigenous Knowledge and Traditions
Wednesdays 1:30 - 4:30pm (In-person delivery)

Instructor: Denise Desormeaux
Email: ddesorme@uwo.ca

I take this opportunity to welcome students to the home territory of the Anishinaabek, Haudenosaunee, Lūnaapéewak and Attawandaron peoples, on lands connected with the London Township and Sombra Treaties of 1796 and the Dish with One Spoon Covenant Wampum. This land continues to be home to a diversity of Indigenous Nations, whom we acknowledge as the original, inherent stewards of the land and vital contributors of our society.

Course Description: This course will examine Indigenous beliefs, ways of knowing, and worldviews; exploring differences and similarities, and contemporary realities, through a variety of sources.

*Please note that for the 2023-2024 academic year, this course will be taught in person. However, there may be occasions when it is taught on line – in these cases advance notice will be given. The teaching format may be subject to change subject depending on local health regulations.

Technical Requirements* :

The preparation material for classes will be provided on line. It is your responsibility to ensure that you have:

- Stable internet connection
- Laptop or desktop computer with updated software
- Working microphone
- Working webcam
- Western University Zoom application installed
- Detailed specifications (see “computer requirements”): <https://registrar.uwo.ca/academics/timetables.html>
- Western Zoom page, including privacy information: <https://wts.uwo.ca/zoom/index.html>
- If you need technical assistance, first search the OWL Help Page, then contact the Western Technology Services Helpdesk using their Online Helpdesk or by calling 519.661.3800 (if on campus, ext. 83800)
 - 3 lecture hours, 0.5 course
 - **Antirequisite(s):** N/A

* In the event of remote learning.

- **Prerequisite(s):** Any course in Arts and Humanities or Social Science and registration in third year or higher.
- Prerequisite checking is the student's responsibility

Learning Outcomes:

Students who successfully complete this course will be able to:

- Identify key principles, values and ethics of engagement with Indigenous knowledge systems (IKS) including their relevance to Treaty relations.
- Identify the ways linguistic, cultural and place-based traditions maintain and shape the continued evolution of Indigenous knowledges and traditions in contemporary Indigenous contexts.
- Demonstrate self-understanding (whether Indigenous to place or not) of the ways in which their own cultural identities, experiences and ancestral her/histories shape their evolving relationship to Indigenous knowledges and practices.
- Demonstrate the relevance of Indigenous knowledges and traditions for informing sustainable practices of citizenship and societal conduct generally.
- Demonstrate self-understanding of how they can ethically engage with Indigenous knowledges within their own lives.

Course format and learning Objectives

1. Course Objectives and Format

This interactive and participatory course will invite students to engage with various dimensions of Indigenous knowledge (IK) as an evolving body of knowledge that has much relevance for contemporary societies, including the social and ecological challenges we face. Students will be encouraged to draw on their own cultural identities and experiences as a means to situate themselves in relation to the material being discussed in class.

This course requires active participation from students, both to enhance your own learning and the learning experience of the entire class. Active learning benefits students by supporting higher level learning and improves retention and importantly for this class, integration with prior knowledge, experiences and ways of being. Lectures or facilitated learning experiences will be interspersed with discussion, group work and other activities.

Learning Objectives

- Students will be introduced to some of the key dimensions of Indigenous knowledge, values underlying Indigenous knowledges, and the relationship between historical forms and contemporary expressions.
- We will discuss the relevance of Treaties to Indigenous knowledge and traditions and the implications of these within evolving Indigenous Governance arrangements today.
- Students will be invited to reflect on their own cultural identities and experiences, and the ways in which these have and continue to shape their relationship to Indigenous knowledge.
- Students will gain an understanding of the ways in which place and relational traditions are embedded in language, stories, ceremony, traditional food, medicine, systems of cultivation and food gathering, and art, maintain traditions.

- E. Students will gain an understanding of the ways in which Indigenous knowledge and traditions are relevant for informing societal conduct and sustainable models of citizenship.
- F. Through class discussions and self-reflections students will gain an understanding of the ways in which they can ethically engage with Indigenous knowledges and traditions within their own lives to enhance individual and societal well-being.

Required Text:

- None. All assigned readings and other preparations will be available on line through the OWL course site, students will be given advance notice when a reading is posted.

Evaluation

Evaluation Components	Percentage of Course Grade	Assignment Schedule
Weekly Written Class Reflections	25%	Due at end of each class
Group Project & Presentations	20%	Due/Present: October 18
Class Engagement	15%	Weekly contributions
Essay	15%	Due: November 22
Community Volunteering “Giving Back”	15%	Due: November 29
Creative Project	10%	Due: December 6

Grading

90 - 100	Excellent
80-89	Very Good
70-79	Good
60-69	Satisfactory
50-59	Less than satisfactory

COURSE SCHEDULE:

Please be aware this schedule could be subject to change – you will be notified in advance if this is the case.

<u>Week & Date</u>	<u>Themes</u>	<u>Assessments</u>
Wk.1: Sept.13	<i>-Introductions: Identities & Intentions</i>	

Wk.2: Sept.20	- <i>Residential School Legacy</i> - <i>Indigenous Family Structures</i> - <i>Contemporary Child Welfare Structures</i> - <i>Displacement / Dispossession</i>	Sept.20: (1) Choice of “Research Topics” for Essays to be determined & shared as a class. (2) “Class Groups” for “Presentations” will be selected today, along with TOPICS CHOSEN.
Wk.3: Sept.27	- <i>Traditional Indigenous Midwifery</i>	
Wk.4: Oct.4	- <i>Indigenous Fall / Harvest Ceremonies</i>	
Wk.5: Oct.11	- <i>Traditional Indigenous Foods Harvest / Hunting</i>	
Wk.6: Oct.18	- <i>Class Group Presentations</i>	<u>Due Oct.18</u> – 20%
Wk.7: Oct.25	- <i>Ancestor Connections / Relationships Humour</i>	
Wk.8: (Nov.1) NO CLASS - FALL READING WEEK October 30 to Nov 5		
Wk.9: Nov.8	- <i>Indigenous Plant Healing Connection</i>	
Wk.10: Nov.15	- <i>Indigenous Healing Societies (Longhouse, Sun Dance, Midewewin)</i>	**TBD** Guest Speakers
Wk.11: Nov.22	- <i>Treaty Agreements / Wampum</i>	Essays <u>Due</u> : Nov.22 – 15%
Wk.12: Nov.29	- <i>Community Volunteerism “Giving Back” & Presentations</i>	<u>Due</u> : Nov.29 – 15%
Wk.13: Dec.6	- <i>Creative Project & Presentations</i> **Giveaway & Potluck** (Semester End Reflections)	<u>Due</u> : Dec.6 – 10%

ASSIGNMENT REQUIREMENTS

(DUE: Weekly) Weekly Written Class Reflections (2 hand-written pages)

Upon completion of weekly class lectures, a hand-written “Class Reflection” is required to be submitted to the Instructor at the end of each class. Indicating what one has learned, how one has been impacted, how one relates (or doesn’t relate) to the information presented will be required. In addition, personal shared lived experiences in relation to the class topic are welcomed. Self-reflexivity, personal beliefs and/or biases challenged or dispelled is very much welcomed within one’s personal, written expression.

(DUE: Weekly) Class Engagement

All students are required to engage in class discussions, expressing freedom of thought and voice, as a means of shared, collective learning. Relationship building, inclusion, understanding, and sense of community development will be fostered throughout the course.

(DUE: Oct.18) Class Group Presentations

Six groups (of “5” students) will be determined. Students will select (from a variety of topics provided by the Instructor) for their Group Research Presentations.

Direction regarding topic subjects will be forthcoming from the Instructor

(DUE: Nov.22) Essay (1,500 words)

Various topics relating to *Indigenous Knowledge and Traditions* will encompass research essay topics.

*** Upon completion of weekly class lectures, a hand-written “Class Reflection” is required to be submitted to the Instructor at the end of each class. Indicating what one has learned, how one has been impacted, how one relates (or doesn’t relate) to the information presented will be required. In addition, personal shared lived experiences in relation to the class topic are welcomed. Self-reflexivity, personal beliefs and/or biases challenged or dispelled is very much welcomed within one’s personal, written expression.

Direction regarding topic subjects will be forthcoming from the Instructor

(DUE: Nov.29) In-Person Community Volunteerism (& Presentations)

Students must complete “10 hours”

(Students must document the Date, Time, and Location of their community contribution, providing Contact Information of the place/organizer/organization (for verification of hours completed).

From the abundance of which we receive in our daily lives, it is within our ancestral ways to ensure continuity of life. We strive to maintain the balance of giving and receiving throughout one’s life journey. Within Indigenous ancestral lifeways, there exists a tremendous importance and emphasis on helping, sharing, and inter-dependence among the collective. Our ceremonies and medicines, our collective one mind, is based on the premise of *Relationships*. To understand and support one another, we must spend the time together, and help each other. In this time of truth and reconciliation, it is through our shared space and breath of life, that we come to understand truth, further fostering our understanding and acceptance of one another, and nurturing our global relationships.

(DUE: Dec.6) Creative Project (& Presentations)

After the first class, decide on a creative project one will aim to have completed by the end of the semester.

During each class, bring one’s creative project to work on throughout the duration of each lecture, during in-class time. Select a project that represents an element of acknowledgement, honour, and respect to Indigenous culture, incorporating symbolism, and/or choice of medium. On the last day of the semester (December 6) a *Potluck / Giveaway* will take place, during which time all creative projects will be gifted amongst the class.

Important Policies

Missed assessments (e.g., presentations, essays) require formal academic considerations (typically self-reported absences). **Methods for dealing with missed work and course content are at the discretion of the instructor.**

Contingency plan for an in-person class pivoting to 100% online learning.

In the event of a COVID-19 resurgence during the course that necessitates the course delivery moving away from face-to-face interaction, all remaining course content will be delivered entirely online, either synchronously (i.e., at the times indicated in the timetable) or asynchronously (e.g., posted on OWL for students to view at their convenience). The grading scheme will not change. Any remaining assessments will also be conducted online as determined by the course instructor. In the event that online learning is required, a stable v1 (2021.09.03) internet connection with working microphone and webcam will be required. As has been the case in the past, the decision to pivot to online learning will be made by Western, and not individual instructors or departments (excepting temporary online instruction in the event of instructor illness).

Policies for Assignment Deadlines

All assignments except for the in-class reflections are to be submitted electronically to the instructor on the due date (by 11:59pm, before midnight). *Late submissions will be penalized at a rate of 5% per day.* Should you have a concern regarding the grade you received for an assignment, you must wait 24 hours from the receipt of the grade to contact the instructor. In doing so, provide an email as to why you feel your grade is inappropriate. Note that calculations errors should be brought to my attention immediately.

Academic Consideration for Missed Work

Students who experience an extenuating circumstance (illness, injury, or other extenuating circumstance) sufficiently significant to temporarily render them unable to meet academic requirements must submit a request for academic consideration through the appropriate route: ****SPEAK DIRECTLY WITH THE INSTRUCTOR****

Students seeking academic consideration:

- Are encouraged to make decisions based on their specific circumstances, recognizing that minor ailments (upset stomach) or upsets (argument with a friend) are not normally an appropriate basis for a self-reported absence.

Academic consideration is not normally intended for the following circumstances:

- Students with an ongoing physical illness or mental disorder (recurring or chronic) or an existing disability are responsible for determining, in consultation with their doctors or other health professionals, if they are capable of pursuing their studies and, if so, with what accommodations. Students are expected to seek and arrange reasonable accommodations with Student Accessibility

Services (SAS) as soon as possible in accordance with the [Policy on Academic Accommodation for Students with Disability](#). Students with pre-existing accessibility plans arranged through SAS may not need to provide additional documentation when seeking academic consideration where such request for consideration relates to their disability and where their accessibility plans allow for coursework deferral or deadline extensions.

- **Students who experience high levels of stress related to academic performance** (including completing assignments, taking part in presentations, or writing tests or examinations) can access supports through [Student Health and Wellness](#) and [Learning Development & Success](#) in order to deal with this stress in a proactive and constructive manner. ****Meet and have a conversation with your Instructor****

A Note on Plagiarism

Students must write their assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major scholastic offence as outlined in the [Scholastic Discipline](#) policy.

Scholastic Offences

Scholastic offences (including plagiarism) are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following web site:

www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

Plagiarism Checking

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (www.turnitin.com).

Policies on Examinations

No electronic devices of any kind are allowed during tests and examinations.

Accessibility Options

Please contact the course instructor if you require material in an alternate format or if you require any other arrangements to make this course more accessible to you. You may also wish to contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at 519 661-2111 x 82147 for any specific question regarding an accommodation. Information regarding accommodation of exams is available on the Registrar's website:

www.registrar.uwo.ca/examinations/accommodated_exams.html

Mental Health

If you or someone you know is experiencing distress, there are several resources at Western to assist you. Please visit the [Mental Wellbeing website](#) for more information on mental health resources.

Indigenous Services:

A link to Indigenous Services can be found at <http://indigenous.uwo.ca>

Writing Support Centre:

A link to the Writing Support Centre can be found at <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/writing/>

Copyright: Lectures and course materials, including power point presentations, outlines, and similar materials, are protected by copyright. You may take notes and make copies of course materials for your own educational use. You may not record lectures, reproduce (or allow others to reproduce), post or distribute lecture notes, wiki material, and other course materials publicly and/or for commercial purposes without my written consent.