

Indigenous Studies Program and Department of English & Writing Studies

First Nations Literatures
English 3680F / Indigenous Studies 3880F (001)
Fall 2019



Mural art at Eelúnaapéewi Lakhéewit (Lenape Nation at Moraviantown)

Instructor: Dr. Pauline Wakeham
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Office Hours:
Tuesdays from 1:30–3:00 p.m.
Thursdays from 1:30–3:00 p.m.

Class Location: University College 2105

Class Date/Time: Tuesdays 3:30–4:20
p.m., Thursdays 3:30–5:20 p.m.

Teaching Assistant: Emily Philp-
Preuss (ephilppr@uwo.ca)

Prerequisites for Indigenous Studies 3880F:

Antirequisite(s): English 3680F/G and English 3880G.

Prerequisite(s): 1000-level English or First Nations Studies 1020E.

Prerequisites for English 3680F:

Antirequisite(s): First Nations Studies 3880F/G and English 3880G.

Prerequisite(s): At least 60% in 1.0 of English 1020E or 1022E or 1024E or 1035E or 1036E or both English 1027F/G and 1028F/G, or permission of the Department, or First Nations Studies 1020E.

Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enrol in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Course Description:

Welcome to First Nations Literatures! This course will provide students with an opportunity to engage with Indigenous concepts and practices of storytelling and to consider the many shapes that Indigenous storytelling takes, including oral narratives, writings, songs, and visual and performance arts. Studying the work of Indigenous artists from across Turtle Island (North America), we will learn about the diversity of Indigenous communities and cultures as well as the particular lands and socio-historical contexts that inform their work. In so doing, we will consider how Indigenous artistic practices express the complexity and vitality of First Peoples' ways of knowing.

Course Objectives:

- To introduce students to and/or enrich their knowledge of Indigenous literary and cultural production on Turtle Island.
- To consider how the study of Indigenous literary and cultural production is enhanced by an attention to Indigenous ways of knowing and, in particular, Indigenous practices of storytelling and their vital importance to many Indigenous communities.
- To consider the relationship between socio-historical contexts and Indigenous literary and cultural production.
- To assist students in honing their critical thinking skills through in-class application of such skills to readings of literary and cultural texts.
- To foster the development and honing of students' academic writing skills through the provision of feedback on the writing process as well as the finished product.
- To foster the development of students' distinctive intellectual voices through the practice of engaged listening and thoughtful class participation as well as through the provision of feedback on written work.

Course Materials:

Cherie Dimaline, *The Marrow Thieves*

Joshua Whitehead, *Jonny Appleseed*

Custom Course Book (Available at the University Bookstore)

Please note that all texts listed on the syllabus with weblinks are not included in the Course Book. Texts listed with URLs may be accessed directly online.

Methods of Evaluation:

Assignment	% of Grade	Due Date	Length
Community Engagement Reflection Paper	15%	ongoing	3 pages
Published Essay Synopsis and Analysis	35%	any time up to and including Oct. 15th	4 pages
Analytic Essay	35%	any time up to and including Nov. 28	6 pages
Participation	15%	ongoing	

Final Grades:

Please note: The department of English & Writing Studies does not release final grades. All undergraduate grade reports will be available online from the Office of the Registrar.

Students are fully responsible for being familiar with the information posted on the English Department website at

<http://www.uwo.ca/english/undergraduate/info%20for%20students.html#grade>.

A Note on Class Participation:

- Attendance is required at all lectures. Repeated absences from class may result in a formal request to be debarred from writing the final exam, as set out in the Western Academic Calendar: “Any student who, in the opinion of the instructor, is absent too frequently from class . . . will be reported to the Dean (after due warning has been given). On the recommendation of the Department concerned, and with the permission of the Dean, the student will be debarred from taking the regular examination.” Debarment from writing the final exam automatically results in failure of the course.
- The course participation mark will be based on students’ attendance and punctuality, thoughtful engagement with course readings, relevant and insightful contributions to class discussion, and respectful engagement with the ideas of other classmates. Adequate preparation for each class involves reading all assigned materials *at least* once and *preferably twice* before class, making notes about these texts (underlining or marking key passages, reflecting on your

responses to the texts, etc.), and preparing potential questions or comments to raise in class.

- A key part of being prepared for and ready to participate in class is bringing hard copies of the assigned readings for the week. We will be working with these texts closely in class discussion, so please bring them with you.

Community Engagement Reflection Papers (3 Pages Double-Spaced)

Over the course of the semester, students should attend, outside of class hours, one campus or community event featuring Indigenous artists or speakers. The Professor will announce a range of suitable events on OWL and in class. Students are welcome to propose alternate events but they must first seek approval from the Professor well *in advance* of attending.

No later than one week after attendance of the event, students should submit a 3-page (double-spaced) reflection paper about the experience. This assignment can be submitted as a **Microsoft Word attachment via email** to the Professor. The paper should include the following components:

- a.) The title of the event, the date, the location, and the name(s) of the speaker(s) and their respective Indigenous nation(s).
- b.) A brief summary of the event and the content of the discussion / presentation (approximately 1-2 paragraphs).
- c.) A reflection on your experience of this event. What were your expectations or assumptions prior to attending the event? How were those expectations or assumptions either challenged or confirmed by your attendance? What did you learn from the event? Please describe what you learned in detail. What did you feel? What were your responses and questions? What did those feelings, responses, and questions teach you about your relation to this event?
- d.) The paper should devote at least one page to relating the experience in some way to at least one of the texts studied in our course. The analytic and creative insights of one of our course readings or texts should be used to foster analysis, critical thinking, and creativity about the event you attended. **Papers of top quality will weave insights from multiple course readings throughout rather than keeping these reflections to just one page.**
- e.) A Works Cited must be included at the end of the assignment.

Assignment Deadline: All eligible events must take place **before the final week of classes** during the Fall 2019 semester. The reflection papers must be submitted no later than one week after the event. After that time, the papers will not be accepted or graded.

Published Essay Synopsis and Analysis (4 Pages Double-Spaced)

This assignment can be submitted in **hard copy** to the Professor at any time during the semester up to and including **October 31, 2019**. After that date, late assignments will be assessed the standard late penalties outlined on this syllabus.

- This assignment is designed to enhance students' knowledge of key debates in the field of Indigenous literary studies. In so doing, students will have the opportunity to hone their critical thinking skills by reading, summarizing, and analysing one scholarly essay. Additionally, students will be asked to consider how the key points in the essay might inform their own engagements with Indigenous literatures.
- For this assignment, students can choose any one of the essays uploaded to the folder titled “**Eligible Essays for Critical Essay Synopsis and Analysis**” in the “Resources” section of the course OWL site.
- I recommend that students read the essay carefully at least twice before commencing the process of writing their synopsis and analysis. It may be useful to go through the essay and highlight the thesis/argument and to summarize each paragraph with some key words that highlight what the paragraph is about.
- The essay synopsis and analysis should include the following components:
 - 1.) An introductory paragraph that identifies the essay to be discussed and explains why you chose it. The introduction should also identify the essay's key topics and questions as well as its overarching argument(s).
 - 2.) One or two paragraphs that proceed to offer a more detailed synopsis of the essay's key points and the way that the essay develops its argument(s). When writing this synopsis, students are welcome and encouraged to utilize brief quotations from the text from time to time to substantiate their discussion. However, long block quotations from the essay are not recommended because the goal is for students to explain the essay in their own words. To this end, **please watch out for paraphrasing that is too similar to the original text.** A sentence that is basically the same as the original but which substitutes out a few words here and there is not proper scholarly paraphrasing; rather, this borders on plagiarism. Be sure to use your own words and when in doubt about a paraphrase that is too close to the original, please use direct quotations instead.
 - 3.) One or more paragraphs that identify what you find compelling about the essay (writing style, examples, particular arguments, and/or insights) and explain why you find those elements compelling. These paragraphs could also critique arguments or ideas you think are problematic (if so, please explain) or raise additional questions or matters for consideration.
 - 4.) One or more paragraphs that discuss how this essay has impacted how you think about Indigenous literatures and/or how you wish to engage with them, applying these thoughts to a particular literary example from our course or elsewhere.
 - 5.) A brief conclusion.
 - 6.) A Works Cited page that lists the essay of your choice in proper MLA format as well as any other sources that you mention in your paper.

Analytic Essay (6 Pages Double-Spaced)

This assignment must be submitted in **hard copy** to the Professor at any time during the semester up to and including **November 28, 2019**. After that date, late assignments will be assessed the standard late penalties outlined on this syllabus.

- This assignment must be an argumentative and analytic scholarly essay that demonstrates strong critical thinking skills, the development of an original argument, and the careful utilization of textual details or “evidence” to support the contentions made in the thesis statement. Essays should include a clear and focused thesis statement followed by the coherent and sustained development of the argument throughout the paper.
- Essays should address more than the plot of the literary text when developing an analysis. Please consider the form of the story or text as well. How does the narrative voice (first person? omniscient?) shape the story? Does the narrative proceed in a chronological order or does it move back and forth in time? Does imagery shape the meaning of the story? If so, how? Please provide detailed textual examples to support your discussion.
- Students are not required to consult secondary sources for this paper but they are welcome to do so should they want to. If secondary sources are consulted, however, they must be acknowledged and cited properly. For further details regarding formatting and correct citation, please refer to the instructions listed in the following section of this syllabus.
- A proper Works Cited should be included at the end of the paper.

Important Information Regarding Assignments:

- All assignments are due at the beginning of class on the scheduled due date. Assignments handed in after the commencement of class on the scheduled due date will be assessed a late penalty of 1%. Any assignments submitted after the due date will be assessed a late penalty (2% per day, including weekends). Assignments must be submitted either directly to the Professor at the beginning of class or submitted as late and handed in to the secure essay drop-off box outside the English Department office (University College Room 2401).
- Extensions will only be granted with medical certification or under other extenuating circumstances and should, when possible, be arranged with the Professor in advance. For further information, please see the section on “Academic Accommodation” in this syllabus.
- **All assignments should be submitted on 8.5” x 11” paper, with 1” margins, double-spaced, and in Times New Roman 12-point font. Please do not use extra spaces between each paragraph. Please staple your essay pages together rather than using binders or plastic report covers. Essays must be submitted in paper copy.** Email, computer disks, and faxes will not be accepted.
- For all students enrolled in English 3680, all bibliographic notations should follow the MLA method of parenthetical citation. All assignments that use secondary sources should be accompanied with a Works Cited page. For information

regarding correct MLA formatting, please consult the PowerPoint Presentation placed on the course OWL site. For all students enrolled in FNS 3880, students may use a bibliographic citation method approved for their particular discipline. Students must inform the instructor of the method they are using (i.e. Chicago Manual of Style, American Psychological Association format, etc.) and students must adhere to those conventions.

- Please retain one hard copy and one electronic version of every assignment you submit. As well, please retain all marked assignments until you receive your final grade for the course.

Accommodation:

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components, and/or assignments worth 10% or more of their final grade must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department. Documentation shall be submitted, as soon as possible, to the Office of the Dean of the student's Faculty of registration, together with a request for relief specifying the nature of the accommodation being requested. The UWO Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness and further information regarding this policy can be found at http://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf.

Downloadable Student Medical Certificate (SMC):

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf

Academic Offences:

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence at http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf.

Plagiarism:

It is crucial that students create all assignments (both written and oral) using their own ideas and their own words. If you use a concept, idea, or phrasing from another source, it is imperative to signal the direct borrowing of words with quotation marks and to register the borrowing of ideas and concepts via the use of explanatory footnotes and parenthetical citations. When in doubt, please cite your source rather than leaving it out! Please also note that the same standards of proper crediting of sources apply to oral presentations. Plagiarism is a serious academic offence.

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 the 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 <http://www.turnitin.com>.

All instances of plagiarism will be reported to the Chair of Undergraduate Studies. Proven cases of plagiarism will result in a grade of zero for the assignment. Subsequent offences will result in failure for the course.

For English Department regulations regarding term work, exams, faculty office hours, academic relief (appeals, petitions, complaints), and other matters, please refer to the “Information for Students” on the departmental website at <http://www.uwo.ca/english/undergraduate/info%20for%20students.html>.

Support Services:

Registrarial Services <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>

Services provided by the USC <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

Student Development Centre <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to MentalHealth@Western: <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

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 661-2111 x82147 for any specific question regarding an accommodation. Information regarding accommodation of exams is available on the Registrar’s website:

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

Schedule of Readings:

Please note that the Professor reserves the right to make minor changes to the class schedule during the semester. Any changes at this point would involve only the deletion of a reading from the schedule or a change of date. All changes will be announced in class ahead of the scheduled date where a change would take place.

Unit 1: Locations: Land, Self, Community

September 5: Welcome and Introduction to the Course

September 10: Engaging with Indigenous Literatures: The Ethics of Reading and Writing

Daniel Heath Justice, “Introduction: Stories that Wound, Stories that Heal”

September 12: Engaging with Indigenous Literatures: The Ethics of Reading and Writing (cont.)

Greg Younging, “Chapter 2: A history of the portrayal of Indigenous Peoples in literature”

Gregory Scofield, “The Dissertation”

September 17: Land, Language, Location

Gloria Alvernaz Mulcahy, “through the eye of the *eshkan ziibi*”

Leanne Simpson, “Land as pedagogy: Nishnaabeg intelligence and rebellious transformation” (full text available here:

<https://jps.library.utoronto.ca/index.php/des/article/view/22170/17985>)

September 19: Land, Language, Location (cont.)

Guest Speaker and Campus Awareness Walk: Wahsayzee Deleary

Unit 2: Indigenous Literatures: Reading Traditions and Innovations

September 24: Writing Workshop

Greg Younging, “Chapter 6: Terminology”

September 26: Oral Storytelling in New Forms

Leanne Simpson, “Land as pedagogy” (continued discussion from previous week)

Leanne Simpson, “The Gift is in the Making”

Leanne Simpson, “Plight”

October 1: Storytelling in New Forms (cont.)

Leanne Simpson, “caribou ghosts & untold stories”

Amanda Strong, dir. *Biidaaban* (Please view this film prior to class. The full film is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vWjnYKyUB8>)

October 3: Storytelling in New Forms (cont.)

Amanda Strong, dir. *Biidaaban*

October 8: Re-Writing Gender

From *The Indian Act*

Lenore Keeshig-Tobias, “(a found poem)”

October 10: Re-Writing Gender (cont.)

From *The Indian Act*

Lenore Keeshig-Tobias, “(a found poem)”

October 15: Re-Writing Gender (cont.)

E. Pauline Johnson, “A Red Girl’s Reasoning” (full text available here:

https://canlit.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/red_girls_reasoning.pdf)

October 17: Re-Screening Resistance to Violence Against Indigenous Women
Elle-Máijá Tailfeathers, dir., *A Red Girl's Reasoning* (please view the full film prior to class: <https://vimeo.com/ondemand/aredgirlsreasoning>)

Unit 3: Contemporary Indigenous Literatures: Writing New Futures

October 22: Indigeneity and Sexuality

Cortney Dakin, "Hearing Two-Spirits" (full text available here: <http://briarpatchmagazine.com/articles/view/hearing-two-spirits>)

October 24: Indigeneity and Sexuality (cont.)

Class Visit with Sākihítowin Awāsis (Cortney Dakin)

October 29: Indigeneity and Sexuality (cont.)

Joshua Whitehead, *Jonny Appleseed*

October 31: Urban Indigeneity

Joshua Whitehead, *Jonny Appleseed*

November 5 and 7: Class Cancelled for Reading Week

November 12: Writing Home

Joshua Whitehead, *Jonny Appleseed*

November 14: Imagining AlterNatives: Indigenous Speculative Storytelling

Drew Hayden Taylor, "I Am... Am I"

November 19: Class Visit with Joshua Whitehead

November 21: The Residential School System in Canada and the Question of Reconciliation

Visit the website for Truth and Reconciliation Canada at <http://www.trc.ca/>

J.R. Miller, "Residential Schools and Reconciliation" (full text available at:

<http://activehistory.ca/papers/history-papers-13/>)

Roland Chrisjohn and Tanya Wasacase, "Half-Truths and Whole Lies: Rhetoric in the 'Apology' and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission"

November 26: Remembering Residential Schools: Defamiliarizing Canada's Past and Present

Cherie Dimaline, *The Marrow Thieves*

November 28: Remembering Residential Schools: Defamiliarizing Canada's Past and Present (cont.)

Cherie Dimaline, *The Marrow Thieves*

December 3: Imagining Indigenous Futures: Resurgence and Community

Cherie Dimaline, *The Marrow Thieves*

December 5: Imagining Indigenous Futures: Resurgence and Community (cont.)

Cherie Dimaline, *The Marrow Thieves*