



The University of Western Ontario
3140F

Indigenous Knowledge and Traditions

Lecture (in person and on zoom): Wednesdays 1.30-4.30pm

Blended format, min 35% on-line

Instructor: Dr Lewis Williams

Office Hours (in person and via Zoom): By appointment.

Email: Lewis.Williams@uwo.ca

I take this opportunity to welcome students to the traditional lands of the Anishinaabek (Ah-nish-in-a-bek), Haudenosaunee (Ho-den-no-show-nee), Lūnaapéewak (Len-ahpay- wuk) and Attawandaron (Add-a-wonda-run) 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 diverse Indigenous peoples (e.g., First Nations, Métis and Inuit) whom we recognize as contemporary whom we recognize as contemporary stewards of the land and vital contributors of our society.

Course Description: Indigenous knowledge, as a distinctive field of study, is emerging as an important tool in the movement toward self-determination and empowerment. This course will examine Indigenous beliefs, ways of knowing, and worldviews to understand their differences and similarities, while exploring contemporary expressions through a variety of sources and interpretations.

*Please note that for the 2021-2022 academic year, this course will be taught using a Blended Format. This means a minimum of 35% content will be delivered online, using synchronous and/or asynchronous formats). Details will be provided on the first day of class and are subject to change depending on local health regulations.

Technical Requirements:

- 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
- **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:

- A. Identify the key epistemological principles, values and ethics of engagement with Indigenous knowledge systems (IKS) including their relevance to Treaty relations.
- B. Identify the ways linguistic, cultural and place-based traditions maintain and shape the continued evolution of Indigenous knowledges and traditions in contemporary Indigenous contexts.
- C. 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.
- D. Demonstrate the relevance of Indigenous knowledges and traditions for informing sustainable practices of citizenship and societal conduct generally.
- E. 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

- A. Students will be introduced to some of the key dimensions of Indigenous knowledges, how they are produced and reproduced; key values underlying IKS; and, the relationship between historical forms and contemporary expressions of IKS;

- B. We will discuss the relevance of Treaties to Indigenous knowledges and traditions and the implications of these for the expression of IKS within evolving Indigenous Governance arrangements today, including contemporary environmental issues;
- C. Students will be invited to reflect on their own cultural identities and experiences, the ways in which these have and continue to shape their relationship to IKS and their contemporary applications;
- D. Students will gain an understanding of the ways in which place, and relational traditions of place-making, as these are embedded in language, stories, ceremony, traditional food and medicine, systems of cultivation and food gathering, and art, both maintain and create new traditions and IK;
- E. Students will gain an understanding of the ways in which IK 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 wellbeing.

Required Text:

- None. All assigned readings and other preparations will be available on line through Western and the course site.

Methods of Evaluation:

1. Digital Story 30%
2. Research Essay 40%
3. Reflective Diary 30%

Course Schedule:

Week and Date	Theme/s and learning medium (In person/ online)	Assessments
WK1 SEP 8th	<i>Introduction to the syllabus and each other.</i> <i>What is Indigenous knowledge and how is it transmitted?</i> Walk to Medicine Gardens. In Person	
WK2 SEP 15th	<i>IK and traditions: Treaties, Indigenous Governance & citizenship.</i> In Person	
WK3 SEP 22nd	<i>IK and traditions - historical & contemporary Contexts</i> In Person	

<p>WK4 Sep 29th</p>	<p><i>IK and traditions: Identity, culture, power and place: Being in relationship with Indigenous Knowledge and Traditions.</i></p> <p>Panel: Sandy Liu, Rick Fehr, Lewis Williams</p> <p>In Person</p>	
<p>WK5 OCT 6th</p>	<p><i>IK & traditions: Contemporary Contexts: Land, Language & Ceremony. The Tiipii Teachings – building healthy relationships and community.</i></p> <p>Guest Speaker Elder Don Ense, Native Child and Family Services, Toronto.</p> <p>On-Line</p>	
<p>WK6 OCT 13th</p>	<p><i>Presentations of digital stories by class members</i></p> <p>In-Person</p>	<p>Oct 13th Assessment One: Digital Stories Due.</p> <p>30% of final mark.</p>
<p>WK7 OCT 20th</p>	<p><i>IK & traditions: Contemporary Contexts: Walpole First Nation, Bkejwanong territory.</i></p> <p>Guest Speakers: Clint Jacobs Natural Heritage coordinator and Ron Sands, Traditional Fire Keeper, WIFN.</p> <p>On-Line</p>	
<p>WK8 OCT 27th</p>	<p><i>IK & traditions and sustainable citizenship: Applying Anishnaabe Aadziwin (Knowledge) to Youth-led Leadership Programming.</i></p> <p>Guest Speaker Hillary McGregor, Manager Standing Bear Youth Leadership Program, Indigenous Sport and Wellness Ontario, Canada.</p> <p>On-Line</p>	
<p>NOV 1st – 7th FALL READING WEEK</p>		

WK9 NOV 10	<i>IK & traditions and sustainable citizenship:</i> Guest Speaker: TBA On-Line	
WK10 NOV 17	<i>IK & traditions and sustainable citizenship: Urban Contexts of Displacement.</i> A Cree Medicine Wheel approach to intergenerational resilience with immigrant and refugee communities in Toronto. In person	16th November Assessment # 2 due. Research Essay 40% Demonstrate how IK and traditions are maintained, adapted and renewed within contemporary colonial contexts and their relevance to sustainable societal context.
WK11 NOV 24	<i>Community Learning Forum</i> In Person	
WK12 DEC 1st	Review of Semester's learnings and class reflections. In person	6th Dec Assessment # 3 due. Reflective Diary 30%.

Important Policies

Ground Rules for how we manage COVID19

Masking Guidelines

Students will be expected to wear triple layer, non-medical, paper masks at all times in the classroom as per University policy and public health directives. Students who are unable to wear a mask must seek formal accommodation through Western Accessible Education, and present medical documentation.

Students are not permitted to eat or drink while in class to ensure masks stay in place. Students will be able to eat and drink outside of the classroom during scheduled breaks.

Students unwilling to wear a mask as stipulated by Western policy and public health directives will be referred to the Dean, and such actions will be considered a violation of the student Code of Conduct.

Course Absences due to Daily COVID Screening Questionnaire

Missed assessments (e.g., presentations, essays, quizzes, tests, midterms, etc.) require formal academic considerations (typically self-reported absences and/or academic counselling). Methods for dealing with missed work and course content are at the discretion of the instructor(s). Students should be aware that some learning

outcomes cannot be easily made up and may need to be completed in a subsequent year. Your instructor will provide you with further information as to how this applies within this course.

Students who demonstrate a pattern of routinely missing coursework due to self-reported COVID symptoms, and therefore do not demonstrate mastery of the learning outcomes of the course, will not receive credit for the course.

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 written assignments are to be submitted electronically to the instructor and are due on or before the date and time specified under “methods of evaluation” for each assignment. This means if your assignment is due at 9.00am and you submit it at 9.31am, it will be considered late. Extension of deadlines or alternate dates for tests will be granted only for documented illness or compassionate reasons. Workloads (i.e., other class work, projects, readings, employment) do not count as a reasonable excuse. *Late submissions will be penalized at a rate of 5% per day, including papers submitted after a specified time.* Further information on “Academic Consideration for Missed Work” is below. Assignment objectives and rubrics will be posted on OWL, as well as discussed in class. Should you have a concern regarding the grade you received for an assignment, you **must wait 24 hours** from the receipt of the grade (on OWL) to contact the instructor. In doing so, *please make an appointment and prepare in writing, with evidence, why you feel your grade is inappropriate.* Please be aware that in requesting a grade reassessment, your grade could go up/down/or stay the same. Note that calculations errors (which do occur!) 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:

- (i) For **absences 48 hours or less**, students can complete a [Self-Reported Absence \(SRA\)](#) form provided the conditions specified in the [Senate policy](#) are met. The form [can be completed online](#). The SRA can be used only twice. Please note the important exceptions to this rule: SRA will not be permitted for final exams or assessments worth more than 30% of a course. In other words SRA do not apply to the Research Essay in this course.

- (ii) Students whose absences are expected to last **longer than 48 hours**, or where the other conditions detailed in the policy are not met (e.g., work is worth more than 30% of a course, the student has already used 2 SRAs, the absence is during the final exam period), may receive academic consideration by submitting a [Student Medical Certificate](#) (for illness) or other appropriate documentation (for compassionate grounds). Students are encouraged to contact their Academic Counselling unit to clarify what documentation is appropriate.

- (iii) All of the Faculty of Social Science Academic Counselling procedures can be found here: <https://counselling.ssc.uwo.ca/procedures/index.html>

Students seeking academic consideration:

- Are advised to consider carefully the implications of postponing tests or midterm exams or delaying handing in work.

- Are encouraged to make appropriate 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.

- **All students pursuing academic consideration, regardless of type, must contact their instructors no less than 24 hours following the end of the period of absence to clarify how they will be expected to fulfill the academic responsibilities missed during their 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). Students with academic or exam stress should access supports through [Student Health and Wellness](#) and [Learning Development & Success](#) in order to deal with this stress in a proactive and constructive manner.

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/>

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