THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO

FIRST NATIONS STUDIES 2251G
Indigenous Film, Music & Voice
Fall-Winter 2018-2019

Thursdays 1:30 – 4:20
SSC 3108

Western University is located on the traditional territories of the Anishinaabe, the Haudenosaunee, and the Leni-Lunaape Peoples.

Instructor: Ian Puppe
Office: SSC 2312
Phone: Email: ipuppe@uwo.ca

Office Hours: Mondays, 12:30-1:30
Location: SSC 3108
Lecture Dates: Thursdays 1:30-4:20

Course Description

This course will explore the expanding use of film, music and voice by Indigenous Peoples in their efforts to maintain, strengthen, and enrich cultural traditions and to innovate artistically, politically and culturally. Issues of representation affect Indigenous Peoples globally, and in response they have been increasingly telling their own stories in order to counteract generations of misrepresentation, stereotyping, and racism. Students will become familiar with the cultural criticism of different forms of entertainment media, ethnomusicology, visual anthropology, and contemporary issues relevant to indigenous Peoples today. This course is reading heavy. It is important that students make a commitment to stay on schedule and attend class regularly in order to grasp course concepts and advance in good standing.

Prerequisite(s): Any Arts and Humanities or Social Science 0.5 or 1.0 Essay course.

Antirequisite(s): None.

Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

Write more clearly. Read with greater comprehension. Demonstrate these increased forms of media literacy in written assignments.

Demonstrate knowledge of and appreciation for the breadth and strength of Indigenous artistic and cultural expression and advocate for Indigenous artists.
Demonstrate critical thinking and analytical skills, deploying Indigenous critiques of contemporary mass media.

Appreciate the severity and intensity of mass media’s misrepresentation of Indigenous Peoples and advocate for Indigenous self-representation and self-determination in media and communication technologies more generally.

**Required Readings** –


All other readings will be made available electronically through the OWL website for the course.

**Methods of Evaluation:**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Due</th>
<th>Value</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Film Response #1</td>
<td>Students will prepare an analysis responding to the documentary Reel Injun, 600-800 words, Times New Roman, 12-point font, double spaced, one-inch margins.</td>
<td>January 24</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Film Response #2</td>
<td>Students will prepare an analysis responding to either Rhymes for Young Ghouls or The Lesser Blessed, 600-800 words, Times New Roman, 12-point font, double spaced, one-inch margins.</td>
<td>February 14</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Music Analysis</td>
<td>Students will prepare an analysis of one song by an Indigenous artist of their choice, 700-1000 words, Times New Roman, 12-point font, double spaced, one-inch margins.</td>
<td>February 28</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
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**Final Assignment**

Students will prepare a short film, music/sound piece or major paper (2500 word max.) as a culmination of their study. Alternative projects are possible as well, but all require a small written component (700 word min.) and a presentation on the final day of class. April 4 40%

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**Important Policies**

**Policies for Assignment Deadlines**

In order to ensure fairness and consistency for all students, academic accommodation for work representing 10% or more of the student’s overall grade in the course shall be granted only in those cases where there is documentation indicating that the student was seriously affected by illness and could not reasonably be expected to meet his/her academic responsibilities. Students are expected to act in a timely manner when seeking and arranging accommodations. A student seeking academic accommodation for any work worth less than 10% must contact the instructor or follow the appropriate Department or course specific instructions provided on the course outline. Policy on Accommodation for Illness: (http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_illness.pdf).

**Policies on Examinations**

The final exam will take place during the designated exam period for this course. The exam will consist of short answer questions and a short essay. It will cover all the course material from week 1 through 12. No electronic devices of any kind (including laptops, cell phones, blackberries, tablets, MP3 players, voice recorders etc.) will be allowed during examinations. The exam is a required part of the course grade, and all students must write the final exam.

**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 (the Scholastic Offence Policy can be viewed in the Western Academic Calendar).

**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).

Policy on Laptops and other Electronics/Phones in Class

Laptops are permitted in class but if it is observed that students are on social networking sites such as Facebook or Twitter, they will be told to close the lid and they will not be permitted to use it for the remainder of the class. Be sure that all cell phones are turned off at the beginning of class.

Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness

Western’s policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness can be found at www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf.

Students must see the Academic Counsellor and submit all required documentation in order to be approved for certain accommodation: http://counselling.ssc.uwo.ca/procedures/medical_accommodation.html

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

Scholastic 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 the following web site: www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

Mental Health

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western (http://uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/index.html) for a complete list of options how to obtain help.

Policy on Children in Class: It is my belief that if we want women in academia, that we should also expect children to be present in some form. Currently, the university does not have a formal policy on children in the classroom. The policy described here is thus, a reflection of my own beliefs and commitments to student, staff and faculty parents.
1) All exclusively breastfeeding babies are welcome in class as often as is necessary to support the breastfeeding relationship. Because not all women can pump sufficient milk, and not all babies will take a bottle reliably, I never want students to feel like they have to choose between feeding their baby and continuing their education. You and your nursing baby are welcome in class anytime.

2) For older children and babies, I understand that minor illnesses and unforeseen disruptions in childcare often put parents in the position of having to choose between missing class to stay home with a child and leaving him or her with someone you or the child does not feel comfortable with. While this is not meant to be a long-term childcare solution, occasionally bringing a child to class in order to cover gaps in care is perfectly acceptable.

3) I ask that all students work with me to create a welcoming environment that is respectful of all forms of diversity, including diversity in parenting status.

4) In all cases where babies and children come to class, I ask that you sit close to the door so that if your little one needs special attention and is disrupting learning for other students, you may step outside until their need has been met. Non-parents in the class, please reserve seats near the door for your parenting classmates.

5) Finally, I understand that often the largest barrier to completing your coursework once you become a parent is the tiredness many parents feel in the evening once children have finally gone to sleep. The struggles of balancing school, childcare and often another job are exhausting! I hope that you will feel comfortable disclosing your student-parent status to me. This is the first step in my being able to accommodate any special needs that arise. While I maintain the same high expectations for all student in my classes regardless of parenting status, I am happy to problem solve with you in a way that makes you feel supported as you strive for school-parenting balance. Thank you for the diversity you bring to our classroom! Credit: Dr. Melissa Cheyney

Weekly Reading/Meeting Schedule

Second Term Begins:

January 10 - Week #1 – Introduction

Going over the syllabus and class introduction -
Situating the study of Indigenous Film, Music and Voice


January 17 - Week #2 – Representation & Stereotypes: Histories against History

Film “Reel Injun” & Morriseau’s painting

January 24 – Week #3 – Taking the Lead: Sending out a call…

Readings – Parker “Photographing the Places of Citizenship,” Parham “Digital Diaspora”

Films “Smoke Signals” & “Dance Me Outside” (*to be watched at home before class)

*Assignment #1 – 20% 1st Film Response - “Reel Injun” Due in Class, January 24

January 31 - Week #4 – Speaking Back: Tables Turned… Over


Film “Rhymes for Young Ghouls”

February 7 - Week #5 – More Backtalk… It Must Be Heard.

Readings – Van Camp “The Lesser Blessed”

Film “The Lesser Blessed” & kid lit. (Ojibway Animals, Sweetest Kulu, The Sharing Circle)

February 14 - Week #6 – Hidden in Plain Sight: Hearing Old News in New Ways


Film “Rumble: The Indians who Rocked the World” & lots of music (Recommended Reading: Hip Hop as Methodology: https://www.cjc-online.ca/index.php/journal/article/view/2534/2783)

*Assignment #2 – 20% 2nd Film Response - Due in Class, February 14

February 21 – No Class – Reading Week

February 28 - Week #7 – Dissent and Resistance: Matters of Survival

Readings – Grillo “Cultural Essentialism and Cultural Anxiety,” Floyd “Pirate Media and Quechua Language”

Film “Kanehsatake: 270 Years of Resistance” & “Caribou Legs Documentary”
*Assignment #3 – 20% Music Analysis - Due in Class, February 28

March 7 - Week #8 – Dreams of Tomorrow: Reaching Out for More


*Film “Indian Horse”

March 14 - Week #9 – Storying Ourselves: Culturally Appropriate Idioms


*Film “Ten Canoes”

March 21 - Week #10 – Relationality and Relational Ontologies: Ginawaydaganuc

Readings – Vizenor “Trickster of Liberty,” Lempert “Decolonizing Encounters of the Third Kind” & Miss Chief Eagle Testicle/Kent Monkman’s painting

*Film “Whale Rider”

March 28 - Week #11 – (Not) Knowing the Way: Indigenous Leaders Today


April 4 - Week #12 – Thriving: Beyond Survivance

Readings – Krupat on “Atanarjuat,” Cruikshank “Melting Glaciers and Emerging Histories”

*Film “Atanarjuat” (*to be watched at home before class)

*Final Assignment – 40% Project, to be presented in class, April 4