

GRANDE PRAIRIE REGIONAL COLLEGE
DEPARTMENT OF ARTS, COMMERCE AND EDUCATION
ANTHROPOLOGY 2550 3(3-0-0), WINTER 2008
CONTEMPORARY CANADIAN NATIVE PEOPLES

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Office Hours: Wednesdays and Thursdays 1:00-2:30. Drop-ins welcome.

Prerequisite: a 3-credit course in the Social Sciences.

Calendar description: Anthropological perspectives on some current situations of Native peoples in Canada.

University Transfer: UA, UC, UL, AU, CU, KUC

REQUIRED TEXTS

THE INDIAN ACT, 1989. (Available on-line at <http://laws.justice.gc.ca/en/l-5/text.html> and in AN2550 scrapbook.)

TREATY 8. (Available on-line at http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/pr/trts/trty8_e.html and in AN2550 scrapbook.)

Portions of the Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, available on-line at http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ch/rcap/sg/sgmm_e.html

CHOOSE AMONG THE FOLLOWING (SEE ASSIGNMENTS)

Bussidor, I. and Bilgen-Reinart, U. (1997). Night spirits: the story of the relocation of the Sayisi Dene. University of Manitoba Press.

King, Thomas (2005). The truth about stories. University of Minnesota.

Ross, Rupert (2006). Dancing with a ghost. Toronto: Penguin Canada.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Aboriginal peoples all over the world have been encapsulated within modern states, and the relationship is usually problematic, especially for the former. The imposition of state (and global) economic systems was accomplished through the appropriation of aboriginal resources (particularly land and labor). Political systems designed to impersonally govern millions of people and relations with other states of the same scale were imposed on small communities. Social systems developed to sustain inequalities and to allow the interaction of strangers replaced systems which assumed everyone is related. Ideological systems envisioning individual human control over the universe challenge those which stress that we are inextricably linked to all beings past, present, and future and are responsible for all of them and for each other. The control the state exerts over aboriginal peoples is, ultimately, military, but it is also expressed in its domination of the mass media and of educational systems. Of particular interest is the perspective that legal systems are created to further particular economic and political interests, and within particular cultural frameworks; however, they can also be utilized by those whose interests are opposed and whose culture is different. Hence the success of recent land claims and inter-governmental agreements, and the increased tendency towards self-determination and self-government.

Following an initial outline of the cultures and societies of aboriginal peoples in Canada prior to European occupation, we shall study their experience under Euro-Canadian domination. We shall examine the Treaties (legal documents by which aboriginal land was acquired) and consequent land claims suits, the Indian Act (designed to control and protect Indian reserve lands and residents), the continuous quest for economic resources, and the effects of Canadian educational, religious and legal institutions. Throughout, our attempt will be to make sense of the Native point of view, its logic and rationale; we shall be learning at least as much of the Euro-Canadian point of view and its logic and rationale.

REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATION

The assignments on Treaties, the Indian Act and films are compulsory. Choose one of the other 20% assignments. Assignments must be handed in to the instructor by 3p.m. Monday of the week they are due. One and only one late assignment may be handed in on Monday of Week 14. Double-space all work. E-mailed assignments are not accepted. All marking of these assignments uses the alpha scale. The instructor will store students' assignments until the second week of the following academic term, when they will be discarded.

In-class assignments (quizzes, group work, etc.) will be timed at the instructor's discretion and will be worth 20% percent of the final course grade. Contributions to the student scrapbook are included among in-class assignments. Ample opportunity to earn points will be provided, so there will be no make-ups for in-class work. As a bonus "in-class" assignment worth ten points, students may meet with me for an in-depth writing tutorial on one of their assignments (or to discuss any topic related to the

course) at any point during the term before the last week of classes. For this portion of this course ONLY, calculate your mark as a percentage of total marks obtainable.

Alpha grade	4-point equivalent	Percentage
A+	4.3	80-100
A	4.0	76-79
A-	3.7	73-75
B+	3.3	70-72
B	3.0	67-69
B-	2.7	64-66
C+	2.3	60-63
C	2.0	55-59
C-	1.7	50-54
D+	1.3	45-49
D	1.0	40-44
F	0.0	< 40

YOU MAY WISH TO KEEP TRACK OF YOUR MARKS HERE:

ASSIGNMENT	%	DUE DATE Monday of	MARK
Treaties	20	Week 5	
FILMS	20	Week 7	
INDIAN ACT	20	Week 9	
NIGHT SPIRITS, THE TRUTH OR DANCING WITH A GHOST	20	Week 12	
(LATE PAPER	20	Week 14)	
In-class Assignments (including scrapbook)	20	Throughout term	

IN-CLASS ASSIGNMENTS AND SCRAPBOOK ENTRIES

DATE	SCORE
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ANTHROPOLOGY 2550
IN-CLASS ASSIGNMENT: STUDENT SCRAPBOOK

Once every two weeks prior to week 13, you are expected to make a contribution to the Student Scrapbook for AN2550, for a total of four contributions, plus an optional “bonus” two. These may consist of a short article, an image, a website or list of websites, a story, etc., and will be stored on Reserve in the Library for all students to access. Include all relevant publication data. It is most important that you include a written explanation of why you have made this contribution and what it means to you. How does it reflect what you are learning about Aboriginal issues in Canada? How can this item help others learn? This will be an indicator of the thought and effort you have put into your selection. Provide a title, your name, and the date. These contributions will be added to the student scrapbook after a brief oral description. Not more than one contribution may be made at a time. Each is worth 5 in-class assignment marks.

ASSIGNMENT: TREATIES

Value: 20%

Due Week 5

PART I

Read carefully Treaty 8, the Treaty Commissioners' Reports and Adhesions answer the following questions.

1.
 - a) When was it signed?
 - b) Which are the First Nations involved?
 - c) What geographic and political areas does it encompass?
2. Why does Her Majesty's government want a Treaty?
3. What are the Indians to give up?
4. What does Her Majesty offer in return?
 - a) as rewards for taking Treaty
 - b) as occasional gifts or assistance
 - c) ongoing and/or regular benefits
5. What rights do Indians have on the lands they have ceded outside of reserved land?
6. What rights do Indians have on reserved land? What rights do others have on reserved land?
7. What do the Indians promise for the future?
8. What is to be the structure of the Indian political system, as implied in the Treaty?
9. How are the Indians expected to make a living in future?

PART II

Read carefully the Reports of the Commissioners for Treaty 8. What concerns were expressed by Indians during Treaty negotiations? How did government representatives respond?

ASSIGNMENT: DOCUMENTARIES

Value: 20%

Due Week 7

The Library at GPRC holds many documentary films which are of relevance to contemporary Native issues. Review five films we have not seen in class, including at least the following information

- a) film title, when it was made, the producer, the director, the distributor, and its length
- b) the people concerned – community, culture, geographical location
- c) a brief plot summary
- d) your understanding of the broader issues it addresses (i.e. what is shared with other communities?)

What is the purpose of documentaries of this sort? What have you learned from them? Films should be at least 30 minutes in length; two shorter films may be substituted for a longer one.

ASSIGNMENT: INDIAN ACT

Value: 20%

Due Week 9

1. Study my synthesis of the Act as it stood up to 1985 (included in this package).

Summarize regulations regarding

- a) enfranchisement
- b) the right to be registered as an Indian
- c) the right to be registered as a band member (on band list)
- d) alcohol use.
- e) the prerogatives and powers of bands and/or band council

2. Read through the 2001 compilation of the Indian Act (available on-line at www.canada.justice.gc.ca). Compare and contrast with the pre-1985 version regulations regarding

- a) enfranchisement
- b) the right to be registered as an Indian
- c) the right to be registered as a band member (on band list)
- d) alcohol use

3. What effect does the Indian Act have on Treaty provisions? Provide specific examples and an overall assessment.

CHOOSE ONE OF THE FOLLOWING ASSIGNMENTS

Value: 20%

Due Week 12

Length: not more than ten pages, or 2500 words. Use references as appropriate.

NIGHT SPIRITS

Some of the principle causes of the disruption of the Sayisi Dene community were:

- a) alcohol
- b) relocation
- c) disruption of trapping and hunting
- d) unemployment
- e) the imposition of Canadian government administration

Describe the effects of these factors on ideology (religion or spirituality, ideas of good and bad, right and wrong), social organization, political life and the economic system of the community.

Which of the listed factors would appear to be the most significant source of change?

REDESIGN GRADE _____

Every society develops an educational system (or method for acculturating youth) coherent with its culture—i.e. its ways of doing and thinking. In Dancing with a ghost, Rupert Ross is attempting to help us understand Ojibwe culture and community. From the perspective of this worldview, how should schools be designed?

Consider attitudes and actions in regards to

- a) time
- b) marks
- c) curriculum
- d) relations between people, e.g. authority and respect
- e) any other factors you consider important

How would this be different from the school system you actually experienced? Why?

THE TRUTH ABOUT STORIES

I'm working on this one!

SCHEDULE OF TOPICS, READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS

Readings are in Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, although other readings may be assigned.

WEEKS 0-2 INTRODUCTION; STEREOTYPES; ETHNOGRAPHIC AND DEMOGRAPHIC OVERVIEW

Read AND answer in-class assignment questions (follow lecture outline)

Volume 1: Looking Forward, Looking Back

4. Stage One: Separate Worlds (all)
2. From Time Immemorial: A Demographic Profile (all)

WEEKS 3-4 TREATIES

Bring Treaty 8 materials to class!

ASSIGNMENT ON TREATIES DUE WEEK 5

Read: (not required, but will help greatly with assignment)

Volume 1: Looking Forward, Looking Back

5. Stage Two: Contact and Cooperation
 - 3.4 Understanding Treaties and the Treaty Relationship (all)
6. Stage Three: Displacement and Assimilation
 4. The Numbered Treaties
 - 4.4 Treaties 4, 5, 6 and 7 (all)
 - 4.5 Northern Treaties: 8, 9, 10 and 11 (all)
 5. Differing assumptions and understandings (all)
 6. Non-Fulfilment of Treaties (all)
 7. Restoring the Spirit of the Treaties

WEEK 5 THE QUEST FOR ECONOMIC RESOURCES; LAND CLAIMS

WEEKS 6-8 INDIAN ACT; ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL UNDERDEVELOPMENT

Bring Indian Act materials to class!

ASSIGNMENT ON FILMS DUE WEEK 7

Read: (not required, but will help greatly with assignment)

Volume 1: Looking Forward, Looking Back

9. The Indian Act: Oppressive Measures
 - 9.1-9.12 (all)

WEEK 9-10 SCHOOLING AND CHURCHING

ASSIGNMENT ON INDIAN ACT DUE WEEK 9

Read:

Volume 1: Looking Forward, Looking Back

10. Residential Schools (all)

WEEKS 11-13 COPING, HEALING, MOBILIZING
NIGHT SPIRITS, SUNDOGS OR DANCING WITH A GHOST DUE WEEK 12

Read:

Volume 3: Gathering Strength

Choose one of the following:

2. The Family (all)
3. Health and Healing (all)
4. Housing (all)
5. Education (all)
6. Arts and Heritage (all)

Volume 4: Perspectives and Realities

Choose one of the following:

2. Women's Perspectives (all)
3. Elders' Perspectives (all)
4. The Search for Belonging : Perspectives of Youth (all)
5. Metis Perspectives (all)
6. The North (all)
7. Urban Perspectives (all)

WEEK 13 FINAL (LATE) PAPER DUE