

GRANDE PRAIRIE REGIONAL COLLEGE  
DEPARTMENT OF ARTS, COMMERCE AND EDUCATION  
ANTHROPOLOGY 2550 3(3-0-0), WINTER 2006  
CONTEMPORARY CANADIAN NATIVE PEOPLES

Instructor: Dr. Laurie Nock

Office: C215

Phone: 539-2830 (office), 539-7348 (home)

E-mail: [lnock@gprc.ab.ca](mailto:lnock@gprc.ab.ca)

Office Hours: Tuesdays 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.

**UT**

REQUIRED TEXTS

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

TREATY 8. (Available on-line at [http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/pr/trts/trty8\\_e.html](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/sq/sgmm\\_e.html](http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ch/rcap/sq/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.

Maracle, L. (1999). Sojourners and Sundogs. Vancouver: Press Gang Publishers.

King, Thomas. Dead Dog Cafe Comedy Hour. 8 episodes on CDs available at the library.

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 any Monday until Week 14, as long as only one assignment is submitted that week. E-mailed assignments are not accepted. All marking of these assignments uses the alpha scale.

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.

<b>Alpha grade</b>	<b>4-point equivalent</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
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	MARK
Treaties	20	Week 4	
INDIAN ACT	20	Week 7	
FILMS	20	Week 9	
In-class Assignments (including scrapbook)	20	Throughout term	
NIGHT SPIRITS	20	Week 10	
DEAD DOG CAFE or SUNDOGS	20	Week 12	
Research paper	20	Week 13	

IN-CLASS ASSIGNMENTS AND SCRAPBOOK ENTRIES

DATE	SCORE
------	-------

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 4

### PART I

Read carefully Treaty 8 and the Treaty Commissioner's Report and answer the following questions.

1.
  - a) When was it signed?
  - b) Which are the First Nations involved?
  - c) What geographic and political area 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 a reward 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 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: INDIAN ACT

Value: 20%

Due Week 7

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](http://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.

## ASSIGNMENT: FILMS

Value: 20%

Due Week 9

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 topic and people it is about (community, culture and geographical region)
- c) 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: NIGHT SPIRITS

Value: 20%

Due Week 10

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

- alcohol
- relocation
- disruption of trapping and hunting
- unemployment
- 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?

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

### ASSIGNMENT: THROUGH ABORIGINAL EYES

Value: 20%

Due Week 12

Describe Canadian society and Euro-Canadian behavior and/or beliefs (stereotypes or thinking about First Peoples) as portrayed by

a) Thomas King in Dead Dog Cafe Comedy Hour.

OR

b) Marianne and her family in Sundogs.

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



## ASSIGNMENT: RESEARCH PAPER

Value: 20%

Due Week 13

This is an opportunity to carry out research into a current issue regarding Aboriginal or First Nations in Canada which is of interest to you. Provide an account of the situation, its history and/or outcome, using appropriate vocabulary and references. Your reference list should include the equivalent of two monographs (books) and two articles, and your paper should be approximately 10 pages (2500 words) in length.

Prior to doing this assignment, you must consult with me by the end of Week 11.