

Indigenous Literatures: Cultures of Storytelling, Cultures of Reading
English 9161
Department of English and Writing Studies
University of Western Ontario

Contact Information:

Instructor: Dr. Pauline Wakeham

Office: 3G10 Arts and Humanities Building

Email: pwakeham@uwo.ca

Telephone: (519) 661-2111 x. 85815

Class Meetings: Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. (30-minute lunch break at noon)

Class Location: Lawson Hall Room 2205

Course Description:

As a graduate-level survey of Indigenous literary and intellectual traditions and innovations, this

short stories, novels, drama, non-fiction writing, and film. With a particular focus on Indigenous cultural production across Turtle Island (or North America), the course will examine both the specificity and remarkable breadth of Indigenous cultures of storytelling as well as the scholarly cultures of reading that have developed in response to these practices. In other words, the course explores how the work of reading and literary-critical interpretation is shaped by cultural perspectives – often those of Western academia – and how practices of Indigenous storytelling and the interventions of Indigenous intellectuals have prompted the development of alternative methods of reading and scholarly engagement that are respectful of and informed by Indigenous epistemologies and lifeways. Through engagement with a range of genres, methodologies, and critical debates, the course will consider the following questions: How does Indigenous cultural production conceptualize and practice diverse forms of storytelling? How might literary studies be re-imagined in relation to the specificity of Indigenous (re)gi

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Guidelines for Class Participation:

- The participation grade for the

- Presentations should also consider how the arguments expounded in the readings could be developed further and, most importantly, how the texts relate to the broader questions under investigation throughout this course. Lastly, presentations should conclude with at least two thoughtful and engaging questions for class discussion.
- Please also note that your presentations will be timed and should not exceed 30 minutes.
- After the presentation, the seminar presenter will also be responsible for leading the ensuing class discussion for about 15 minutes.
- Students will be asked to submit a hard copy version of their seminar presentation notes (whether they be just point form notes or a scripted paper if you like to talk without a set script, that is certainly fine and can make for a very engaging seminar) to the Professor on the same day that their presentation is given orally.
- Please note that plagiarism rules apply to oral presentations. Oral presentations should clearly signal when a speaker is quoting so

Important Information Regarding Assignments:

- Any assignments submitted after the scheduled due date will be assessed a late penalty (2% per day, including weekends). Assignments (with the exception of the weekly reading responses) must be submitted in hard copy. Email and faxes will not be accepted.
- Extensions will be granted only with medical certification or under other extenuating circumstances and should, when possible, be arranged in advance.
- All assignments should be submitted on 8.5 in a 12-point font (preferably Times New Roman). The title page should include the following information: the title of the essay, your name, the course number, and the date.
- Please retain one hard copy and one electronic version of each essay you submit in this class. As well, please retain all returned, marked assignments until you receive your final grade for the course.
- All bibliographic notation should follow the MLA method of parenthetical citation and essays should be accompanied with a Works Cited page.

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 the following website: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholastic_discipline_grad.pdf
- It is crucial that students create all assignments (both written and oral) using their own ideas and their own words. If a writer uses 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 (or verbal explanation in the case of seminar presentations).

Graduate Course Health and Wellness:

As part of a successful graduate student experience at Western, we encourage students to make their health and wellness a priority. Western provides several on-campus health-related services to help you achieve optimum health and engage in healthy living while pursuing your graduate degree. For example, to support physical activity, all students, as part of their registration, us cultural events are

offered throughout the year. For example, please check out the Faculty of Music web page
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May 29 and 31: Class Cancelled for the Congress of the Humanities and Social Sciences

Section 2: Literary Critical Methods

June 5: "Orature": Attending to Orality in Textuality

Kimberly

Nature Power: In the Spirit of an Okanagan Storyteller

June 7: Oral Storytelling on Stage: Indigenous Performance Cultures

Tomson Highway, "On native mythology"

Floyd Favel Starr, "The artificial tree: native performance culture research, 1991-1996"

De-ba-jeh-mu-jig Theatre Group, *The Gift*

June 12: Native Literary Nationalism

Craig Womac

oaches in Canadian

Indigenous Contexts--

June 14: Native Literary Nationalism in Practice: Nishnaabe Cultures of Storytelling

Leanne Simpson, "Gdi-Nweninaa: Our Sound, Our Voice"

Leanne Simpson, "Niimtoowaad Mikinaag Gijiying Bakonaan (Dancing on Our Turtle's Back): Aandisokaanan and Resurgence"

June 19: Trans-Indigenous Literary Studies

to Trans-Indigenous: Methodologies for Global Native Literary Studies

June 21: Trans-Indigenous Literary Studies in Practice

Thomas King, *Truth and Bright Water*

A Trans-Indigenous Reading of Land-
Truth and Bright Water

June 26: Indigenous Futurisms and Speculative Storytelling

Richard V

June 28: Indigenous Futurisms and Speculative Storytelling

Cherie Dimaline, *The Marrow Thieves*

Lee Maracle, "Conversation 12: Response to empathy from settlers"

Lee Maracle, "Reconciliation and residential school as an assimilation program"