

Introduction to Indigenous Spirituality

Instructor: Dr. Robert Antone

office:

Office hrs: 5pm to 6pm day of Wednesday class

Phone:

Email: rantone@uwo.ca

Time & Place: MSJ 185 6:PM TO 9:PM

Course Description: This course is focused on North American Indigenous spirituality. This course will offer an introduction to the diversity, complexity and vitality of Indigenous spiritual traditions in North America. Students will cultivate an understanding and basic knowledge of Indigenous worldviews and cosmologies with a special focus on: the current reality of Indigenous spirituality; creation stories and storytelling; the evolution of narrative therapy and healing practices; and the future of Indigenous spirituality. The course will focus primarily on cultures of Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe.

Course Summary:

Subject areas that will be cover include the following: the definition and role of spirituality in Indigenous life; cultural structures “housing” spirituality, clan system, naming, song, recitation, storytelling; cultural resources of Indigenous spirituality, herbal medicines, sharing circles, drum, song, dance; traditional modes of searching for spirit, fasting, vision quest, the pipe, and the sweat lodge; and the full expression of spirituality in ceremonies.

This course will be taught by persons familiar with Haudenosaunee and Anishinabe teachings. The instructors will introduce Indigenous protocols during the course while examining the following major topics;

- Foundational spiritual knowledge
- The impact of colonization on Indigenous spirituality
- Examination of the space Indigenous spirituality occupies today
- How Indigenous people still share their knowledge

The course employs adult learner approaches that respect the learner as an equal in the learning circle. Students are responsibility for their own learning. The learning will begin with a review of the course outline for the purposes of discussion and input of additional topics for discussion. This is intended to be an experiential class where students will be given opportunities to participate in Indigenous ceremonies or other traditional Indigenous activities. Participation in ceremonies or traditional Indigenous activities is not mandatory, students are encouraged to participate to broaden opportunities for learning and promoting greater understanding.

Course Objectives

- To examine some foundational spiritual traditions of Anishinabe and Haudenosaunee peoples;
- To explore the impact of colonialism on Indigenous peoples

- To explore the resilience of Indigenous cultures
- To examine the role of that spirituality can play in the creation of peace and respectful co-existence.

Course Resources:

Readings are listed for each week. Most are available on a web site. I will recommend books that are essential readings for on-going studies in Indigenous Spirituality.

Benton-Banai, Edward. 2010 reprint The Mishomis Book: The Voice of the Ojibway

Cornelius, Carol. 1998 Iroquois Corn in a Culture-Based Curriculum: Framework for Respectfully Teaching about Cultures

Porter, Tom (Sakokwenionkwas) 2008 And Grandma Said... Iroquois Teachings as passed down through the oral tradition. Fonda, N.Y. Xlibris.

Method of Evaluation

Attendance and Participation	25%
Class Commentary/Reflection	25%
Major Research Assignment (10 pages)	25%
Final Exam test	25%

Course Requirement

Class participation is important. This course is a study of oral traditions and therefore it is important to be involved in the discussions and group circles.

Class Commentary; after each week you will be required to submit a two (2) page summary of our personal learning from each week directly related to this course which also includes readings. This will be due the following Monday. You are expected to do five (5) commentaries in response to the following guides;

1. What was the discussion about this week?
2. What were the most important points made?
3. How did this week's discussions influence my thinking (being)?
4. What is one unresolved point you still question?

We want you to use this exercise to explore how spirituality influences one's abilities.

Major Research Assignment

You will be required to write an essay on a particular spiritual ceremony, practice, protocol, teaching, or music that is particular to your learning. You are encouraged to seek out additional research

resources. The essay should reflect thorough research from additional three sources including articles beyond the listed resources. The essay will be double spaced and typed with #12 pt Times New Roman font. The essay is due June 8, 2016 at the beginning of the class.

Written assignments are subject to a late penalty of 2% per day (excluding weekends) which will be waived only in the cases of documented illness, injury, or death in the immediate family.

Final Exam

The final exam will be given in class on the last day of class.

TOPIC OUTLINE

Week One
May 9: Welcome, Introductions, Course Overview & Setting the Context Introduction to the course; protocols, basic teaching of expectations. Preparing your Introduction: In your introduction reflect on the first 10 years and/or the 2 nd 10 years of your life and identify a life experience, a significant person, a learning, that inspired you're spirituality.
May 11: What is Indigenous spirituality? What is your thought about what spirituality is and what it is not?
<u>Readings:</u> http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/policy-preventing-discrimination-based-creed/11-indigenous-spiritual-practices http://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/pubs/abo-aut/spirit-spiritualite-eng.htm
Week Two
May 16: Ojibwa Spirituality: an explanation of the teachings of Ojibwa spirituality
May 18: Instruments of Indigenous Spirituality & protocols: drum, pipe, shaker, song These are the objects of the culture that are used to express spirituality
<u>Readings:</u> https://mishomisbook.wordpress.com/chapter-summaries/ this site has a number of drop downs that will give meaning to these teachings

Week Five

June 6: Teachings about the sweat lodge. From an Ojibwa perspective the fundamentals of this teaching will be given and how preparations are made for this ceremonial event.

June 8: A Sweat Lodge – re-birthing, recovery, rejoicing. This will be an offsite event that will be arranged.

Readings:

http://www.shinzen.org/Articles/Sweat_Lodge_Orientation.pdf

you will have to use the uwo library site to access the following document;

TOWARDS AN ABORIGINAL MODEL OF SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE: Cultural Knowledge and Traditional Practices Vern Morrissette, Brad McKenzie and Larry Morrissette Canadian Social Work Review / Revue canadienne de service social Vol. 10, No. 1 (Winter/hiver 1993), pp. 91-108

Week Six

June 13: Indigenous Spirituality a global concern.

June 15: Indigenous spirituality: Testing our knowledge and experiences

Readings:

<http://www3.brandonu.ca/library/CJNS/28.2/07Grieves.pdf>

BRESCIA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE ACADEMIC POLICIES AND REGULATIONS

1. POLICY REGARDING MAKEUP EXAMS AND EXTENSIONS OF DEADLINES

When a student requests academic accommodation (e.g., extension of a deadline, a makeup exam) for work representing 10% or more of the student's overall grade in the course, it is the responsibility of the student to provide acceptable documentation to support a medical or compassionate claim. All such requests for academic accommodation **must** be made through an Academic Advisor and include supporting documentation. Academic accommodation on medical grounds will be granted only if the documentation indicates that the onset, duration and severity of the illness are such that the student could not reasonably be expected to complete her academic responsibilities. Appropriate academic accommodation will be determined by the Dean's Office in consultation with the student's instructor(s). Please note that personal commitments (e.g., vacation flight bookings, work schedule) which conflict with a scheduled test, exam or course requirement are not grounds for academic accommodation.

A UWO Student Medical Certificate (SMC) is **required** if a student is seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds. This documentation should be obtained at the time of the initial consultation with the physician/nurse practitioner or walk-in clinic. A SMC can be downloaded under the Medical Documentation heading of the following website: <https://studentservices.uwo.ca/secure/index.cfm> . If it is not possible to have an SMC completed by the attending physician/nurse practitioner, the student must request documentation sufficient to demonstrate that her ability to meet academic responsibilities was seriously affected. Please note that under University Senate regulations documentation stating simply that the student "was seen for a medical reason" or "was ill" is **not** adequate to support a request for academic accommodation. All documentation is to be submitted to an Academic Advisor.

Whenever possible, requests for academic accommodation should be initiated in advance of due dates, examination dates, etc. Students must follow up with their professors and Academic Advisor in a timely manner.

The full statement of University policy regarding extensions of deadlines or makeup exams can be found at <http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2015/pg117.html>

2. ACADEMIC CONCERNS

If you feel that you have a medical or personal problem that is interfering with your work, contact your instructor and Academic Advisor as soon as possible. Problems may then be documented and possible arrangements to assist you can be discussed at the time of occurrence rather than on a retroactive basis. Retroactive requests for academic accommodation on medical or compassionate grounds may not be considered.

If you think that you are too far behind to catch up or that your work load is not manageable, you should consult an Academic Advisor. If you consider reducing your workload by dropping one or more courses, this must be done by the appropriate deadlines (refer to the Registrar's website, www.registrar.uwo.ca, for official dates). You should consult with the course instructor and the Academic Advisor who can help you consider alternatives to dropping one or more courses. *Note that dropping a course may affect OSAP eligibility and/or Entrance Scholarship eligibility.*

The Dean may refuse permission to write the final examination in a course if the student has failed to maintain satisfactory academic standing throughout the year or for too frequent absence from the class or laboratory.

3. ABSENCES

Short Absences: If you miss a class due to a minor illness or other problems, check your course outline for information regarding attendance requirements and make sure you are not missing a test or assignment. Cover any readings and arrange to borrow notes from a classmate. Contact the course instructor if you have any questions.

Extended Absences: If you have an extended absence, you should contact the course instructor and an Academic Advisor. Your course instructor and Academic Advisor can discuss ways for you to catch up on missed work and arrange academic accommodations, if appropriate.

4. POLICY ON CHEATING & ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

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: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf.

Students are responsible for understanding the nature of and avoiding the occurrence of plagiarism and other academic offences. Students are urged to read the section on Scholastic Offences in the Academic Calendar. Note that such offences include plagiarism, cheating on an examination, submitting false or fraudulent assignments or credentials, impersonating a candidate, or submitting for credit in any course without the knowledge and approval of the instructor to whom it is submitted, any academic work for which credit has previously been obtained or is being sought in another course in the University or elsewhere. Students are advised to consult the section on Academic Misconduct in the Western Academic Calendar.

If you are in doubt about whether what you are doing is inappropriate or not, consult your instructor, the Student Services Centre, or the Registrar. A claim that "you didn't know it was wrong" is not accepted as an excuse.

The penalties for a student guilty of a scholastic offence (including plagiarism) include refusal of a passing grade in the assignment, refusal of a passing grade in the course, suspension from the University, and expulsion from the University.

Plagiarism:

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea or a passage 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 academic offence (see Scholastic Offence Policy in the Western Academic Calendar).

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the 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.

Computer-marked Tests/exams:

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating. Software currently in use to score computer-marked multiple-choice tests and exams performs a similarity review as part of standard exam analysis.

5. PROCEDURES FOR APPEALING ACADEMIC EVALUATIONS

All appeals of a grade must be directed first to the course instructor. If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the course instructor, a written appeal signed by the student must be sent to the Department Chair. If the response of the department is considered unsatisfactory to the student, she

may then submit a signed, written appeal to the Office of the Dean. Only after receiving a final decision from the Dean may a student appeal to the Senate Review Board Academic. A Guide to Appeals is available from the Ombudsperson's Office, or you can consult an Academic Advisor. Students are advised to consult the section on Academic Rights and Responsibilities in the Western Academic Calendar.

6. PREREQUISITES AND ANTIREQUISITES

Unless you have either the prerequisites for a course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you will be removed from the course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Similarly, you will also be deleted from a class list if you have previously taken an antirequisite course unless this has the approval of the Dean. These decisions may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course because you have taken an antirequisite course.

7. SUPPORT SERVICES

The Brescia University College Registrar's website, with a link to Academic Advisors, is at <http://brescia.uwo.ca/academics/registrar-services/>. The Western Registrar's website is at <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca/index.html>. The website for the Student Development Centre at Western is at <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>. Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health @ Western <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Portions of this document were taken from the Academic Calendar, the Handbook of Academic and Scholarship Policy and the Academic Handbook of Senate Regulations. This document is a summary of relevant regulations and does not supersede the academic policies and regulations of the Senate of the University of Western Ontario.