

CONTEMPORARY INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE

RESIDENTIAL COLLEGE IN THE ARTS & HUMANITIES | MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
FALL 2010 | RCAH 330 SECTION 002

PROFESSOR INFORMATION |

Dylan A.T. Miner, PhD
C230J Snyder Hall
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884-1323

DAY + TIME |

TTh 1:00-2:20 | C204 Snyder Hall

OFFICE HOURS |

T 2:30-4:00 + by appointment

'To protect their heritage, indigenous peoples must control their own means of cultural transmission and education. This includes their right to the continued use and, wherever necessary, the restoration of their languages and orthographics.'

– Principles and Guidelines of the Heritage of Indigenous Peoples (United Nations)

'Sharing is a responsibility of research. The technical term for this is the dissemination of results, usually very boring to non-researchers, very technical and very cold. For indigenous researchers sharing is about demystifying knowledge and information and speaking in plain terms to the community.'

– Linda Tuhiwai Smith (Maori)

'We were given speech by the Great Spirit to foster goodwill among ourselves, and to commune with the spirits. It has both a practical and a spiritual end. It is a sacred act...In order to inspire trust we must attend to our elders, who have urged us to listen and to talk—but to be as gentle in our speech as the balm of the south wind.'

– Basil Johnston (Cape Croker Anishinaabe)

COURSE DESCRIPTION |

Taking a global perspective, this course will discuss the role that Native knowledge plays in the contemporary world, paying particular attention to Indigenous cultures in the Americas (North and Latin America). As such, we will look at contemporary Indigenous culture as a unique form of knowledge that may allow us to create a better and more just world for everyone. During the course, students will meet with local Indigenous intellectuals, leaders, and elders to discuss ideas that are presently circulating throughout Indian Country and the implications these have for both Native and Non-Native communities alike. This course offers many exciting possibilities for collaborative and community work.

OBJECTIVES |

Due to the interdisciplinarity of this course, the goals and objectives are likewise multiple. By reading, discussing, analyzing, producing, and engaging course material, students will accomplish the following:

- Begin to see Indigenous epistemologies and ontologies as unique bodies of knowledge;
- Understand the living and open-ended nature of Indigenous knowledge;
- View the construction and maintenance of Native knowledges as viable and workable alternatives to the ongoing legacy of capitalism and colonialism;
- Demonstrate a thorough understanding of Native American and Indigenous studies, as a growing academic field of study;

- Develop an awareness of contemporary Indigenous issues in Michigan, the Great Lakes, Indian Country, Turtle Island, and the Fourth World, more generally.

The course will also help you meet general liberal learning outcomes, as outlined by the American Association of Colleges and Universities.

These include, but are not limited to:

- Develop a robust *knowledge of human cultures and the natural world*;
- Improve *intellectual and practical skills*, such as inquiry and analysis, critical and creative thinking, communication, literacies, and problem solving;
- Enhance *personal and social responsibility* through direct civic participation, ongoing intercultural competency, and continued ethical reasoning and action;
- Demonstrate *integrative learning* by synthesizing Indigenous and Western knowledge across disciplinary fields.

READINGS |

There are seven main texts which *must* be purchased. If this causes undue economic hardship, please speak directly with me. Additional readings will be used to support and complicate the main ideas gleaned from these texts. These supplemental texts will be available for download as PDF files, which I prefer to be printed off and brought to class. Since readings will be discussed during the class in which they are listed on the syllabus, you are required to have completed the readings before coming to class.

READING LIST |

01. Taiaiake Alfred. *Wasáse: Indigenous Pathways of Action and Freedom* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005).
02. Joyce Green. *Making Space for Indigenous Feminism* (New York: Zed Books, 2007).
03. Basil Johnston. *The Manitous: Spiritual World of the Ojibway* (Minneapolis: Minnesota Historical Society, 2001).
04. Alex Khasnabish. *Zapatistas: Rebellion from the Grassroots to the Global* (New York: Zed Books, 2010).
05. Clara Sue Kidwell and Alan R. Velie. *Native American Studies* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2005).
06. Paul Chaat Smith. *Everything you Know about Indians is Wrong* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 2009).
07. Linda Tuhiwai Smith. *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* (New York: Zed Books, 1999)
08. PDFs available on angel.msu.edu

GRADING |

writing assignment 1	25%
writing assignment 2	25%
audio video documentary	30%
weekly writing + participation	20%

GRADING SCALE |

4.0	100-93
3.5	92-86
3.0	85-81
2.5	80-76
2.0	75-71
1.5	70-66
1.0	65-61
0.5	60-55
0.0	54-0

ATTENDANCE |

As part of the Residential College in Arts and Humanities, attendance is expected!! Although I will not be actively ‘taking roll,’ you will be obliged to reflect upon classroom activities and

discussion in the form of weekly writing assignments. Therefore, continued absences will alter your ability to comprehend the overall themes of the course. Moreover, your presence in the classroom is needed for full participation credit. As such, your attendance may positively or negatively affect your final grade through multiple avenues.

POLICY ON ACADEMIC FREEDOM + INTEGRITY |

In agreement with Article 2.3.3 of the *Academic Freedom Report* which states that ‘the student shares with the faculty the responsibility for maintaining the integrity of scholarship, grades, and professional standards,’ it is expected that students neither plagiarize nor copy from a peer’s intellectual or creative work. In addition, the RCAH adheres to the policies on academic honesty as specified in *General Student Regulations* 1.0, Protection of Scholarship and Grades, and in the All-University Policy on Integrity of Scholarship and Grades, which are included in *Spartan Life: Student Handbook + Resource Guide* (<http://www.vps.msu.edu/SpLife/index.htm>). Students who engage in academically dishonest activities may receive a 0.0 on that given assignment or for the overall course.

POLICY ON ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES |

Students with disabilities that may interfere with completing your assigned course work may speak with me, as well as contact the *Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities* to establish reasonable accommodations. For an appointment with a counselor, call 353-9642 [voice] or 355-1293 [TTY].

SEPTEMBER 02 INTRODUCTION**Thursday**

01. Marie Battiste and James (Sa'ke'j) Youngblood Henderson (2000). "What is Indigenous Knowledge?" and "The Importance of Language for Indigenous Knowledge." *Protecting Indigenous Knowledge and Heritage*. Saskatoon, SK: Purich; 35-56 and 73-85.

SEPTEMBER 07 + 09 UNDERSTANDING INDIGENOUS STUDIES**Tuesday**

Clara Sue Kidwell and Alan Velie. *Native American Studies* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2005); 1-82.

Thursday

Clara Sue Kidwell and Alan Velie. *Native American Studies* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2005); 83-100, 131-141.

SEPTEMBER 14 + 16 DEFINING OURSELVES**Tuesday**

Alison Jones, with Kuni Jenkins. "Rethinking Collaboration: Working the Indigene-Colonizer Hyphen." In Norman K. Denzin, Yvonna S. Lincoln and Linda Tuhiwai Smith, eds. *Handbook of Critical and Indigenous Methodologies* (Los Angeles: Sage, 2008); PDF.

Thursday**Visit from Prof. Matthew Fletcher (Anishinaabe)**

Paul Chaat Smith. *Everything you Know about Indians is Wrong* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 2009); pages TBD.

Possible Additional Readings from Prof. Fletcher, TBA.

SEPTEMBER 21 + 23 THEORY AND METHODOLOGIES**Tuesday****Watch *Whale Rider* (Niki Caro, 2002)**

Linda Tuhiwai Smith. *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* (New York: Zed Books, 1999); 1-41.

Thursday**Watch *Whale Rider* (Niki Caro, 2002)**

Linda Tuhiwai Smith. *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* (New York: Zed Books, 1999); 123-162.

SEPTEMBER 28 + 30 ANISHINAABEG KNOWLEDGE**Tuesday****Visit from Don Lyons (Anishinaabe, Huadenoshonee)**

Basil Johnston. *The Manitous: Spiritual World of the Ojibway* (Minneapolis: Minnesota Historical Society, 2001); 1-49.

William W. Warren. *History of the Ojibway People* (Minneapolis: Minnesota Historical Society, 2009 [1885]), PDF.

Thursday

Basil Johnston. *The Manitous: Spiritual World of the Ojibway* (Minneapolis: Minnesota Historical Society, 2001); 51-113.

OCTOBER 05 + 07 ANISHINAABEG KNOWLEDGE**Tuesday**

Basil Johnston. *The Manitous: Spiritual World of the Ojibway* (Minneapolis: Minnesota Historical Society, 2001); 115-149.

Thursday Possible Visit from Anishinaabemowin-speaking elders
Basil Johnston. *The Manitous: Spiritual World of the Ojibway* (Minneapolis: Minnesota Historical Society, 2001); 151-237.

OCTOBER 12 + 14 INDIGENOUS VISUALITIES 1

Tuesday Visit from Jimmy Manning (Inuit) and Kananginak Pootoogook (Inuit)
Clara Sue Kidwell and Alan Velie. *Native American Studies* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2005); 101-130.

Robert Kardosh. "The Other Kananginak Pootoogook." *Inuit Art Quarterly* 22:1 (2007:14): PDF.

Robert Kardosh. "The New Generation: A Radical Defiance." *Inuit Art Quarterly* 23:4 (Winter 2008); PDF.

Alootook Ipellie. "The Colonization of the Arctic." In Gerald McMaster and Lee-Ann Martin, eds. *Indigena: Contemporary Native Perspectives* (Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre, 1992); PDF.

Thursday Possible Video Conference, National Museum of the American Indian
Janet Berlo and Ruth B. Phillips. *Native North American Art* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998); PDF.

OCTOBER 19 + 21 INDIGENOUS VISUALITIES 2

Tuesday Watch Alanis Obomsawin film
Steven Leuthold. "Expressive Antecedents of Native North American Documentary." *Indigenous Aesthetics: Native Art, Media and Identity* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1998); PDF.

Beverly Singer. *Wiping the War Paint of the Lens: Native American Film and Video* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001);PDF.

Thursday Visit MSU Museum
Marsha L. MacDowell, ed. *Gatherings: Great Lakes Native Basket and Box Makers* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Museum and Nokomis Learning Center, 1999); PDF.

Marsha L. MacDowell, ed. *Anishinaabek: Artists of Little Traverse Bay* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Museum and The Little Traverse Band of Odawa Indians, 1996);PDF.

Marsha L. MacDowell and C. Kurt Dewhurst, eds. *To Honor and Comfort: Native Quilting Traditions* (Santa Fe: Museum of New Mexico in association with Michigan State University Press, 1997);PDF.

Marsha L. MacDowell and Janie Reed, eds. *Sisters of the Great Lakes: Art of American Indian Women* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Museum and Nokomis Learning Center, 1995); PDF.

OCTOBER 26 + 28 TRADITIONAL ECOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE

Tuesday

Fikret Berkes. *Sacred Ecology: Traditional Ecological Knowledge and Resource Management* (Philadelphia: Taylor and Francis, 1999.); PDF.

Gregory Cajete. *Native Science: Natural laws of Interdependence* (Santa Fe: Clear Light Publishing, 1999); PDF.

Winona LaDuke. "Traditional Ecological Knowledge and Environmental Futures." In *The Winona LaDuke Reader* (Stillwater, MN: Voyageur, 2002); PDF.

Thursday Visit, Tim Knox (Gamilaraay)

Daniel R. Wildcat. *Red Alert!: Saving the Planet with Indigenous Knowledge* (Golden, CO: Fulcrum Publishing, 2009); PDF.

Additional Readings, TBA

NOVEMBER 02 + 04 NATIVE YOUTH CULTURES

Tuesday

Paul Chaat Smith. *Everything you Know about Indians is Wrong* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 2009): pages TBD.

Thursday Visit from Sacramento Knoxx (aka Chris Yopez)

Beatnation.org, download articles in PDF format and read.

SNAG Magazine, PDF.

NOVEMBER 09 + 11 INDIGENOUS FEMINISMS

Tuesday

Joyce Green. *Making Space for Indigenous Feminism* (New York: Zed Books, 2007); 20-32, 33-52, 93-106, 124-137.

Thursday

Joyce Green. *Making Space for Indigenous Feminism* (New York: Zed Books, 2007); 72-89, 108-121, 140-157, 174-185, 187-197.

NOVEMBER 16 + 18 GENDER, SEXUALITY AND HEALTH

Tuesday

Joyce Green. *Making Space for Indigenous Feminism* (New York: Zed Books, 2007); 53-70, 160-173, 199-213, 221-230, 233-240, 241-254.

Thursday Visit from Ashley Harding (Diné)

Readings, TBA

NOVEMBER 23 + 25 INDIGENOUS LIBERATION

Tuesday

Taiaiake Alfred. *Wasáse: Indigenous Pathways of Action and Freedom* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005); 1-100.

Thursday

Thanksgiving

NOV. 30 + DEC. 02 PRACTICING REBELLION***Tuesday***

Alex Khasnabish. *Zapatistas: Rebellion from the Grassroots to the Global* (New York: Zed Books, 2010); 1-95.

Thursday

Alex Khasnabish. *Zapatistas: Rebellion from the Grassroots to the Global* (New York: Zed Books, 2010); 96-204.

DECEMBER 07 + 09 COMING FULL CIRCLE

Final Discussions

Taiiaki Alfred. “Restitution is the Real Pathway to Justice for Indigenous People.” In *Response, Responsibility, and Renewal: Canada’s Truth and Reconciliation Journey* (Ottawa: Aboriginal Healing Foundation); PDF.

December 13 Final Examination
12:45 – 2:45