

COURSE OUTLINE

Course Instructor: Prof. Neera Singh
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Class Meetings: Room: SSH 2125 (Sid Smith Building)
Thursdays 5-7 PM

Office Hours: Room: SSH 5023
Wednesdays 1-3 PM (or by appointment)

Course Description

The course explores the diverse ways of understanding and responding to the world that emerges from Indigenous cultures globally. In specific, we will examine how Indigenous ways of being and relating to natural environments can help us understand and address the current environmental crisis. Using examples of Indigenous activism from around the world, including Canada, we will examine how colonial histories shape dispossession, foster resistance and inform visions for the future. Topics covered in the course include traditional ecological knowledge, place-based social movements, environmental concerns of Indigenous peoples, bio-cultural restoration and decolonization of nature-human relations.

Marking Scheme Summary

		Due Dates
Reading Responses (3x 10%)	30%	Oct 2, October 19 and Nov 16
Class Contributions	20%	Weekly, ongoing
Class reflections pieces	15%	
“Peer-review”	5%	Due Nov 2, 2017
(of one group’s final paper proposal)		
Final Research Paper and Class Presentation (in groups of 4)		
Outline for class presentation	3%	Monday @12PM before presentation
Class Presentation	12%	Once, between Week 6-12
Final Paper Proposal	10%	October 26, 12PM
Final Paper	25%	December 6, 5PM

Course Ethos

This course strives to use engaged and active learning drawing from principles of collaboration, mutual support and ethics of care. Course assignments and grading schemes reflect a commitment to these principles. To do so in a large university class setting, we will rely on the use of group discussion, films and student presentations. Our success at achieving this will largely depend on everyone's engaged participation and commitment to creating a respectful and collaborative learning experience.

Throughout this course, you will do substantial work in groups. This will include research on a topic related to the course themes (broad topics indicated below) and sharing your research with the class (as a class presentation). Working in groups will provide you with an opportunity to model principles of respect, mutual support and collaboration.

Course Deliverables

Reading Response Papers (30%):

You are expected to submit three reading response papers during the semester. I will post some guiding questions to help you frame your reflections on the course readings (and films). These reflection papers should be between 4-5 pages, double-spaced (approx. 800-1200 words). Each of these reflection papers will be worth 10% of your grade. The due dates for reading response papers are:

September 28, 2017 (covering readings from week 2-4), by 12 PM

October 19, 2017 (covering readings from week 5-7), by 12 PM

November 16, 2017 (covering readings from week 8-10), by 12 PM

Class Contribution (20%)

Class Reflection Pieces (15%): From weeks 2-6, you will write a brief class reflection piece. We will set aside the last ten minutes of class time, during which you will write a brief paragraph. These reflection pieces cannot simply take the form of "Interesting discussion!" or "Enjoyed the lecture!" but should reflect on the concepts introduced through the lecture, film(s), or student presentations. I will use these reflection pieces to identify points of clarification or discussion. The reflection pieces will be graded for engagement with the ideas introduced in class (and not content) and I encourage you to be honest when you are struggling with ideas. From week 7, you will submit these reflection notes online through Blackboard and these reflections will specifically include feedback on your colleagues' class presentations. This feedback will be consolidated and provided to the presenters. You are only required to provide detailed feedback on one presentation per class.

You can miss two classes (and reflection pieces) without penalty. Needless to say, if you miss classes that will affect your ability to do well in the course. It is your responsibility to catch up on the material that you have missed including viewing a film that you might have missed.

"Peer-Review" of one group's Paper Proposals (5%): You will "peer-review" one group's final paper proposal (see details below). This will provide you an opportunity

to practice providing constructive feedback to your peers. Each group will receive feedback from about 4 “peer-reviewers” (in addition to the feedback from the course instructor). This review will be due on November 2nd by 12 PM. You will have about a week for this assignment. More detailed guidelines will follow.

In-class Presentation, Paper Proposal and Final Paper

Working in groups (average four people per group), you will undertake research on a topic related to course themes. There will be four deliverables:

- 1) Outline for class presentation (3%, due on Monday by 12PM before the class presentation)
- 2) Class presentation (12%) (Spread over weeks 6-12)
- 3) Final Paper Proposal (10%) due on October 26th by noon.
Final Paper (25%)

Your final papers will also be written as a group project, but will have clearly identified individual contributions. Detailed guidelines and potential topics will be posted on Blackboard separately. Class presentations should engage with the themes of the week and exemplify them through a case study. Please discuss your Class Presentation idea and Final Paper Proposal with me in advance. Potential presentation topics include:

Week 6: Indigenous Knowledge/ Traditional Ecological Knowledge (case studies)
Week 7: Beyond “Traditional Ecological Knowledge”/ The Politics of TEK
Week 8: Indigenous Resistance to Extractive Industries in the Global South/ Place-based Movements
Week 9: Indigenous Activism in North America (Case-studies)
Week 10: Indigenous Peoples and Conservation (Case-studies)
Week 11: Environmental Justice and Indigenous Peoples
Week 12: Buen Vivir/ Rights of Nature/ Legal Pluralism/ Indigenous Activism and Resurgence in Canada/ Other topics

Specific deadlines for the group work and presentation are as follows:

Group Formation: September 25, 2017, We will form groups in class in Week 3 (at the start of the class period). Come to the class on time so that you can get the topic and week of your choice. If you miss the class, we will allocate you randomly to a group. Groups will be finalized by September 25th.

In-class Presentations: Student presentations will be spread through the semester from Week 6-12 with 2 presentations per week. The presentations will be about 15-minutes each and you are encouraged to use creative forms to present your material.

Outline for the Class Presentation: Due by noon on Monday before the class when you are scheduled to present. Email the Class Presentation Outline to neera.singh@utoronto.ca.

Final Paper Proposal: October 19, 2017 by 12 PM

Final Paper: December 6, 2017 by 5PM

The final paper (one submission by your group) will be about 7000-8000 words. As part of your final paper submission, please include details of each individual's contribution (who contributed what to the research and writing). You are encouraged to write individual sections (after collaborative work on delineating sections), peer-review each other's work and write the introduction and conclusion sections collaboratively. While you can divide up work in ways that builds on individuals' strengths, it will be best to share research and writing responsibilities equally and learn from each other.

Assignment Submission and Late Penalty

All assignments for this class are to be submitted electronically via Blackboard. There will be a late-penalty of 5% for each day late. No assignments will be accepted more than one week after the due date unless the student has obtained prior permission from the instructor in the case of documented illness or other extenuating circumstances.

Academic Integrity/ Plagiarism

Please familiarize yourself with what counts as academic misconduct:

<http://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/osai/The-rules/what-is-academic-misconduct>

Also, check out the rules relating to how to document the sources of information that you use and how to avoid plagiarism:

<http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize>

Using information directly from sources such as books, articles, videos, the Internet or work of fellow students without proper citation is plagiarism. Quotation marks are required when using someone else's words. Changing a few words in a sentence is not enough to make it your own. Be aware that cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated. Nor should you submit any academic work for which credit has previously been obtained or is being sought. The Department and University treat these all as serious offenses and sanctions are severe.

Accessibility Needs:

The University of Toronto is committed to accessibility. If you require accommodations for a disability, or have any accessibility concerns about the course, the classroom or course materials, please contact Accessibility Services as soon as possible. For details see:

<http://studentlife.utoronto.ca/as/>

Course Readings and Required Book

We will be mainly using journal articles that can be accessed through the University of Toronto's library system.

Required Book: Kimmerer, R. W. (2013). *Braiding sweetgrass: Indigenous wisdom, scientific knowledge and the teachings of plants*. Milkweed Editions.

Course Overview

	Topics	Notes
Sept 7 (Week 1)	Introduction to the Course: The current ecological crisis and Indigenous wisdom	Video: Wade Davis' talk "The Wayfinders: Why Ancient Wisdom Matters in the Modern World"
Sept 14 (Week 2)	Indigeneity and Belonging	
Sept 21 (Week 3)	Indigenous Worldviews	
Sept 28 (Week 4)	Nation-to-Nation Relationship and Treaty Relations in Ontario	Response Paper 1 due @12 PM (readings from Weeks 2-4)
Oct 5 (Week 5)	Geographies of Dispossession and Resistance	
Oct 12 (Week 6)	Indigenous Knowledge	Student presentations (2)
Oct 19 (Week 7)	Beyond "Traditional Ecological Knowledge": Indigenous "Place-Thought" and Worldmaking Practices	Response Paper 2 due (readings from Weeks 5-7); Student Presentations (Politics of IK)
Oct 26 (Week 8)	Agency of the Place, Ethics of Care and Human Becomings	Final paper proposals due by 12PM; Student Presentations (2)
Nov 2 (Week 9)	Human and More-than-human relations	"Peer-reviews" of proposals due. Student Presentations (2)
Nov 9	Fall Break: No class meeting	
Nov 16 (Week 10)	Indigenous Peoples, Conservation and Hope for Abundant Futures	Response Paper 3 (covers readings from Weeks 8-10); Student Presentations (2)
Nov 23 (Week 11)	Decolonizing Nature-Human Relations	Student Presentations (2)
Nov 30 (Week 12)	Imagining Alternate Futures	Student Presentations (2 or 3) FINAL PAPERS DUE December 6, 2107 @5PM

Course Readings¹

September 7, 2017

Week 1: Introduction to the Course: The current ecological crisis and Indigenous wisdom

TED Talk by Wade Davis: "The Wayfinders: Why Ancient Wisdom Matters in the Modern World"

Required Readings:

Klein, N. (2015). One way or another, everything changes. In *This changes everything: Capitalism vs. the climate*. Simon and Schuster. [Available as pdf on the Blackboard].

Todd, Z. (2016). Relationships (Theorizing the contemporary). *Cultural Anthropology*.
<https://culanth.org/fieldsights/799-relationships>

Margaret Atwood. (2009). Time capsule found on a dead planet. Reproduced in *I'm with the Bears: Short Stories from a Damaged Planet*. Verso. 2011. [2 short pages]

September 14, 2017

Week 2: Indigeneity and Belonging

Merlan, F. (2009). Indigeneity: Global and local. *Current Anthropology*, 50(3), 303-333. [read only the main essay page 303-320, 19 pages]

Kimmerer, R. W. (2013). "Skywoman Falling" and "In the Footsteps of Nanabozho: Becoming Indigenous to Place" and "Allegiance to Gratitude," In *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous wisdom, scientific knowledge and the teachings of plants* (pp. 3-10, pp. 205-215, pp. 105-117). Milkweed Editions.

The UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

September 21, 2017

Week 3: Indigenous Worldviews

Salmon, E. (2000). Kincentric Ecology: Indigenous Perceptions of the Human-Nature Relationships. *Ecological Applications*. 10(5), 1327-1332.

Mitchell, H. (2005). Nehithawak of Reindeer Lake Canada: Worldview, Epistemology and Relationship to the Natural World. *Australian Journal of Indigenous Education*. 34, 33-43.

Kimmerer, R. W. (2013). "Learning the Grammar of Animacy," and "Epiphany in the Beans" In *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous wisdom, scientific knowledge and the teachings of plants* (pp. 48-59, 121-127). Milkweed Editions.

Recommended:

Johnston, D. (2005). *Respecting and Protecting the Sacred*. Prepared for the Ipperwash Inquiry. [pages 1-5 only]

Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples. Volume 4: Perspectives and Realities: Elders Perspectives. Chapter 3, Sections 2, 3, 4, 5.6, 5.9, 6.0 (only). <http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100014597>

¹ Some changes to these readings are possible. If any changes are made, I will make an announcement through the Blackboard and upload the revised reading list on Blackboard.

September 28, 2017

Week 4: Nation-to-Nation Relationship and Treaty Relations in Ontario

Guest Lecture (to be confirmed): Prof. Deborah McGregor, Canada Research Chair in Indigenous Environmental Justice, York University

Battell Lowman, E., & Barker, A. J. (2016). It's always all about the land. In *Settler: Identity and colonialism in 21st century Canada* (pp. 48-68). Fernwood Publishing.

Linden, S. (2007). Chapter 3: Treaty Relations in Ontario. *The Report of the Ipperwash Inquiry*. 43-74.

Linden, S. (2007). Chapter 5: Natural Resources. *The Report of the Ipperwash Inquiry*. [pages 105-110 only]

Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples. (1996). Looking Forward, Looking Back. In *Highlights From the Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples: People to People, Nation to Nation*.

October 5, 2017

Week 5: Geographies of Dispossession and Resistance

Film: The Colonization Road

Harris, C. (2004). How Did Colonialism Dispospossess? Comments from an Edge of Empire. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 94(1): 165-182.

Wainwright, J., & Bryan, J. (2009). Cartography, territory, property: postcolonial reflections on Indigenous counter-mapping in Nicaragua and Belize. *cultural geographies*, 16(2), 153-178.

Optional:

Coombes, B., Johnson, J. T., & Howitt, R. (2012). Indigenous geographies I: Mere resource conflicts? The complexities in Indigenous land and environmental claims. *Progress in Human Geography*, 36(6), 810-821.

Barker, A. J. (2009). The contemporary reality of Canadian imperialism: Settler colonialism and the hybrid colonial state. *The American Indian Quarterly*, 33(3), 325-351.

October 12, 2017

Week 6: Indigenous Knowledge

Ingold, T., & Kurttila, T. (2000). Perceiving the environment in Finnish Lapland. *Body & Society*, 6(3-4), 183-196.

Simpson, L. B. (2014). Land as pedagogy: Nishnaabeg intelligence and rebellious transformation. *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society*, 3(3).

Nadasdy, P. (1999). The politics of TEK: Power and the "integration" of knowledge. *Arctic Anthropology*, 1-18.

Student Presentations: Examples of Indigenous Knowledge (2)

October 18, 2017

Week 7: Beyond "Traditional Ecological Knowledge": Indigenous "Place-Thought" and Worldmaking Practices

de la Cadena, M. (2015). Uncommoning Nature. *E-Flux Journal 56th Biennale*.

- Watts, V. (2013). Indigenous place-thought and agency amongst humans and non humans (First woman and sky woman go on a European world tour!). *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society*, 2(1).
- Escobar, A. (2016). Thinking-feeling with the Earth: Territorial Struggles and the Ontological Dimension of the Epistemologies of the South. *AIBR. Revista de Antropología Iberoamericana*, 11(1).

Student Presentations: Beyond “Traditional Ecological Knowledge”/ The Politics of TEK

October 25, 2017

Week 8: Agency of the Place, Ethics of care and Human Becomings

- Suchet-Pearson, S., Wright, S., Lloyd, K., & Burarrwanga, L. (2013). Caring as Country: Towards an ontology of co-becoming in natural resource management. *Asia Pacific Viewpoint*, 54(2), 185-197.
- Singh, N. M. (2013). The affective labor of growing forests and the becoming of environmental subjects: Rethinking environmentality in Odisha, India. *Geoforum*, 47, 189-198.
- Gibson-Graham, J. K. (2011). A feminist project of belonging for the Anthropocene. *Gender, Place and Culture*, 18(01), 1-21.

Student Presentations: Indigenous Resistance to Extractive Industries in the Global South/ Place-based Movements

November 2, 2017

Week 9: Human and More-than-Human Relations

- Todd, Z. (2014). Fish pluralities: Human-animal relations and sites of engagement in Paulatuq, Arctic Canada. *Études/Inuit/Studies*, 38(1-2), 217-238.
- Nadasdy, P. (2007). The gift in the animal: The ontology of hunting and human–animal sociality. *American Ethnologist*, 34(1), 25-43.
- Haraway, D. (2015). Anthropocene, capitalocene, plantationocene, chthulucene: Making kin. *Environmental Humanities*, 6(1), 159-165.
- Optional:
 Kimmerer, R. W. (2013). “The Gift of Strawberries” and “Maple Nation: A Citizenship Guide,” In *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous wisdom, scientific knowledge and the teachings of plants* (pp. 22-32, 167-174). Milkweed Editions.

Student Presentations: Indigenous Activism in North America

November 9, 2017: Fall Break, NO CLASS MEETING

November 16, 2017

Week 10: Indigenous Peoples, Conservation and Hope for Abundant Futures

- Dowie, M. (2005). Conservation refugees: When protecting nature means kicking people out. *Orion*, 24(6).
- Schwartzman, S., & Zimmerman, B. (2005). Conservation alliances with Indigenous peoples of the Amazon. *Conservation Biology*, 19(3), 721-727.

Collard, R. C., Dempsey, J., & Sundberg, J. (2015). A manifesto for abundant futures. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 105(2), 322-330.

Optional:

Nadasdy, P. (2005). Transcending the debate over the ecologically noble Indian: Indigenous peoples and environmentalism. *Ethnohistory*, 52(2), 291-331.

Student Presentations: Indigenous Peoples and Conservation

November 23, 2017

Week 11: Decolonizing Nature-Society Relations 1

Ingold, T. (2006). Rethinking the animate, re-animating thought. *Ethnos*, 71(1), 9-20.

Howitt, R., & Suchet-Pearson, S. (2006). Rethinking the building blocks: Ontological pluralism and the idea of 'management'. *Geografiska Annaler: Series B, Human Geography*, 88(3), 323-335.

Sullivan, S. (2009). Green capitalism, and the cultural poverty of constructing nature as service-provider. *Radical Anthropology*, 3, 18-27.

Optional

Singh, N. M. (2015). Payments for ecosystem services and the gift paradigm: Sharing the burden and joy of environmental care. *Ecological Economics*, 117, 53-61.

Student Presentations: Environmental Justice and Indigenous Peoples

November 30, 2017

Week 12: Imagining Alternate Futures/ Wrap-Up

Gudynas, E. (2011). Buen Vivir: Today's tomorrow. *Development*, 54(4), 441-447.

Clark, N. (2008). Aboriginal cosmopolitanism. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 32(3), 737-744.

Sundberg, J. (2014). Decolonizing posthumanist geographies. *cultural geographies*, 21(1), 33-47.

Optional:

Hunt, S. (2014). Ontologies of Indigeneity: The politics of embodying a concept. *cultural geographies*, 21(1), 27-32.

Student Presentations: Buen Vivir/ Rights of Nature/ Legal Pluralism/ Indigenous Activism and Resurgence in Canada/ Other topics.