

History 3267 G
Residential Schools
Winter 2024

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This is a **draft** syllabus. Please see the course site on OWL for a final version.

Course Description:

The House of Commons unanimously passed a resolution in 2022 recognizing the Indian Residential School System as an act of genocide. This resolution recognized the cultural, physical, sexual, and psychological abuse that was inherently associated with the provision of Indigenous education.

This course will focus on the history and legacy of the Indian Residential School System from its colonial predecessors through to a global reckoning after the identification of mass, unmarked graves at former school sites across the country. This course will begin with an overview of education within Indigenous communities both pre-and-post residential schools. This will be followed by the history of colonial education in New France considering both domestic influences, including the work of Marie de l'Incarnation, alongside global conversations such as the Valladolid Debates of the 1550s on the rights of Indigenous Peoples.

This will be followed by a consideration of residential schools in Upper Canada and the influence of Indigenous community members who sought to establish cross-cultural educational facilities including Rev. Peter Jones, Chief Shingwaukose, and John Brant. Their ideas will be compared with those of Nicholas Flood Davin and Sir John A. Macdonald who understood the American system of residential schools as a way to address constitutional requirements associated with Indigenous education. These domestic conversations will be situated within international debates across the British Empire, considering residential schools in both Australia and New Zealand.

A focus of this course will be on the lived experiences of Indigenous children in the residential school system throughout the 19th and 20th century. This will consider acts of cultural, physical, sexual, and psychological abuse at the hands of school administrators and between individual students. It will also consider the academic curriculum and the reliance upon student labour to financially support the operation of the residential schools. Extracurricular activities including the Girl Guides, Cadets, and organized sports will be discussed to consider a variety of aspects associated with the student experience.

The course will begin to conclude with amendments to the Indian Act in 1951 that led to the transition from residential schools to Indian Day Schools and integration within the provincial school system. The course will then touch upon the Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement (2006), which was recognized as the largest class action lawsuit in Canadian history. It will conclude with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada in 2015, the identification of unmarked graves at former residential schools in 2021, and the House of Commons genocide resolution in 2022.

This is a 2-hour lecture course that will meet once weekly.

Prerequisite(s):

1.0 History course at the 1000 level OR Indigenous Studies 1020

Course Level Learning Outcomes:

- Introduction to pre-colonial and contemporary forms of Indigenous education
Situating the Indian Residential School System within a global context including comparisons amongst the United States and the British Empire.
- Understand the structural inequalities associated with Indigenous education including chronic underfunding and the factors that led to systemic abuse and mistreatment.
- Consider examples of daily life within the residential school system relating to curriculum, recreation and leisure, farming, and domestic labour.
- Identify factors leading to reconciliation both nationally and internationally.
- Define pluralist and legalist definitions of genocide associated with the Indian Residential School System and the broader experiences of Indigenous Peoples in North America.

Methods of Evaluation

- **Participation:** Ongoing, Weight 20%
- **Primary Source Analysis 1:** Due Week 5, Weight 15%
- **Primary Source Analysis 2:** Due Week 8, Weight 15%
- **Book Review:** Due Week 10, Weight 20%
- **Residential School Portfolio:** Due April 8, Weight 30%

Participation - Ongoing (20%)

Students will be required to write a question at the end of the weekly class. This will count as their weekly participation mark. Some of these will be chosen for further discussion during the subsequent week. Attendance at 80% of the lectures is required to pass this course.

Primary Source Analysis 1 and 2 - Week 5 and Week 8 (15% each)

For the first Primary Source Analysis students will choose from the assigned primary source readings in Week 1, 2, 3, or 4. They will be asked to analyze one of these in order to consider authorship, perspective, and the narrative that is presented. For the second Primary Source Analysis, students will consider one of the assigned primary source readings from Week 5, 6, or 7, and address the same questions. These will each be three pages long. These will be due in Week 5 and Week 8, respectively.

Book Review – Week 10 (20%)

Students will choose from one of the following books: *Aki-wayn-zih: A Person as Worthy as the Earth* by Eli Baxter (2021) or *The Boy from Buzwah: A Life in Indian Education* by Cecil King

(2022). For this assignment, students will be required to summarize the major themes of their chosen memoir and to situate these themes within two scholarly, peer-reviewed secondary sources. Students will be expected to directly reference the memoir and both of their secondary sources. This will be five pages long. This will be due Week 10.

Residential School Portfolio – Week 12 (30%)

Students will be provided with a list of four Indian Residential Schools from across Canada. They will be responsible for identifying three secondary sources and two primary sources regarding the school and will create a portfolio with analysis regarding the school's establishment, the lived experience of students, or the legacy of the school itself. This will be six pages long. This will be due April 8.

Late Assignments: The penalty for late work without an approved accommodation from Academic Counselling is 2% a day, including weekends, with a maximum deduction of 20%. After that point assignments will not be accepted.

Course Materials

All readings will be available through OWL. No additional purchases will be required.

Course Schedule and Readings

- Week One: Community Based Indigenous Education
- Week Two: Mission Schools in New France, 1640s
- Week Three: Pre-Confederation Residential Schools, early 1800s
- Week Four: Imperialist Education in the British Empire
- Week Five: Establishing the Indian Residential School System, 1880s
- Week Six: Cultural Assimilation and the Eradication of Indigenous Identity
- Week Seven: Physical, Sexual, and Psychological Abuse
- Week Eight: Residential School Curriculum, Manual Labour, and Domestic Service
- Week Nine: Recreation and Leisure Within Residential Schools
- Week Ten: Day Schools and Hostels: Transitioning from Residential Schools, 1950s
- Week Eleven: Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement and the TRC
- Week Twelve: Residential Schools and Genocide

Additional Statements

Use of Generative AI Tools: All work submitted in this course must be your own. You may not make use of generative AI tools like ChatGPT for any assignments in this course.

Please review the Department of History's shared policies and statements for all undergraduate courses at: https://history.uwo.ca/undergraduate/program_module_information/policies.html for important information regarding accessibility options, make-up exams, medical accommodations, health and wellness, academic integrity, plagiarism, and more.