

History/ Indigenous Studies 2210 F
Indigenous Peoples and Canadian History
Fall 2026

Lecture: Monday 11:30- 2:30

Instructor: Dr. Cody Groat

Email: cgroat@uwo.ca

Office: Department of History, Lawson Hall 2224

Office Hours: Monday 9:30- 11:00 and 2:30- 3:30

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

Course Description

Canadian history has often perpetuated nationalist interpretations that continue to minimize the presence of Indigenous peoples within their own sovereign territories. This course challenges these interpretations by demonstrating the permanency of Indigenous peoples and the continuity of their beliefs, practices, and political systems within (and outside of) the Canadian nation-state. Topics will include ‘milestone’ events, including the Northwest Resistance, the Red Power Movement, the Creation of Nunavut, and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. This course will also demonstrate a broad range of historical methodologies including intersectional analysis and the use of micro-histories to re-center Indigenous peoples in other events that were significant to the development of Canada such as the Suffrage Movement, the Cold War, and 2SLGBTQ rights.

Prerequisite(s): 1.0 History course at the 1000-level or above OR 1.0 Anthropology course at the 1000-level OR Indigenous Studies 1020

Course Level Learning Objectives:

- Be able to define and apply the following terms within a Canadian context: Indigenous, Aboriginal, sovereignty, settler colonialism, intersectional analysis, micro-history
- Be able to differentiate between the legal definitions of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis
- Understand and demonstrate how the rights of Indigenous peoples have been impacted by the British North America Act (1867), the Indian Act (1876), the Canadian Constitution (1982), the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (1996) and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (2015)
- Be able to demonstrate how historical scholarship influences public policy and public perceptions relating to Indigenous peoples

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Methods of Evaluation

Class Participation – Ongoing (20%)

Students will submit a written question, comment, or response at the end of each lecture. These will be graded as either 50%, 75%, or 100%. Your final participation grade will be an average of all your participation grades throughout the semester, subtracting the two lowest participation grades that you received during the semester. Students are encouraged to write **specific comments or questions about the course content to demonstrate active learning and listening** instead of simply stating something that you found interesting.

In-Class Quizzes - October 19 (10%) and November 30 (10%)

Students will have 45 to write a 5-question short answer in-class quiz. Quiz One will cover Week 1, 2, 3, and 4 and Quiz Two will cover Weeks 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10. Students will be required to state the significance of certain terms. Both quizzes must be written in-class to pass the course.

Issue Portfolio – Proposal (October 5) – 20% and Final (December 7) – 40%

Students must start by choosing a **contemporary** issue that affects Indigenous peoples in Canada. Students will then identify **one piece of legislation, two primary documents, two contemporary media articles, and three peer-reviewed secondary sources** that speak to their chosen topic. This means that students are required to use **eight** different sources.

Further instruction will be given in class as to the most effective way to properly find legislation, primary documents, and contemporary media articles.

For the proposal, students will write a one-page description of their contemporary issue and explain how this relates to the history of Indigenous peoples in Canada. In other words, you must present a clear picture as to how *the past effects the present*. The rest of the proposal will be an annotated bibliography explaining **one media article, one piece of legislation, one primary source, and two secondary sources** that you might use in your final assignment. The annotated bibliography entries should be half a page long each and should explain how each of the sources will be used when explaining how your contemporary issue relates to the history of Indigenous peoples in Canada. A strong assignment will also demonstrate, in the annotated bibliography, how the sources complement each other.

The final Issues Portfolio will be 10 pages long. Students have some flexibility as to how they might wish to present this. A strong portfolio will focus on the contemporary issue and use all eight sources to **clearly demonstrate** how an understanding of the past allows us to better understand the present. When using each of the eight sources, students should consider the **author, audience, and perspective**, clearly explaining how these can impact the ways in which this topic has been presented. A cohesive structure (instead of simply explaining one source after another) is also considered the strongest approach to this assignment.

Students are encouraged to attend the guest lecture with CBC's Brett Forester on November 23rd as this provides a real-world example of connecting the past and the present using a range of different sources.

Absences and Late Assignments: Students must attend at least ten lectures to pass this course, regardless of grades for your other assignments. You must complete all course assignments to pass this course. A three-day extension is permitted for Issue Portfolio Proposal. After this extension, there will be a 2% late penalty for every day that the assignment has not been handed in, with a maximum deduction of 20%. The Issue Portfolio Final has a firm deadline of December 7 at 11:59pm.

Course Materials: Course materials will be available through OWL or the university library. No additional purchases are necessary.

Course Schedule and Readings

Date	Weekly Theme	Assigned Readings
September 14	Foundational Concepts	Eve Tuck, "Suspending Damage: A Letter to Communities," <i>Harvard Educational Review</i> 79, 3 (2009): 409- 428
September 21	Indigenous Nationhood	Allan Downey, "Indigenous Brooklyn: Ironworking, Little Caughnawaga, and Kanien'keha:ka Nationhood in the Twentieth Century," <i>American Quarterly</i> 75 (1) (2023): 27-50
September 28	Confederation and the <i>Indian Act</i>	J.I. Little, "Courting the First Nations Vote: Ontario's Grand River Reserve and the Electoral Franchise Act of 1885," <i>Journal of Canadian Studies</i> 52 (2) (2018): 538-569
October 5	The Metis Nation and the Numbered Treaties	Chapter 3 "Written Treaties, Falsehoods, and Oral Histories," 67- 86 Chapter 4 "Refusal, Unceded Territory, Metis

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		<p>Scrip, and Modern Treaties,” 87- 108</p> <p><i>In Talk Treaty to Me: Understanding the Basics of Treaties and Land in Canada</i> by Crystal Gail Fraser and Sara Komarnisky. Collins, 2026</p>
October 12	Reading Week	No Readings
October 19	Indigenous Families	<p>Allyson Stevenson, “The Adoption of Frances T: Blood, Belonging, and Aboriginal Transracial Adoption in Twentieth-Century Canada,” <i>Canadian Journal of History</i> 50, 3 (2015): 469-491</p>
October 26	The World Wars	<p>Eric Story, “The Indigenous Casualties of War: Disability, Death, and the Racialized Politics of Pensions, 1914- 1939,” <i>The Canadian Historical Review</i> 102, 2 (2021): 279-304</p>
November 2	Residential Schools and Indigenous Education	<p>Crystal Gail Fraser, “The Long Process of Tearing Our Family Apart” in <i>By Strength, We Are Still Here: Indigenous Peoples and Indian Residential Schooling in Inuvik, Northwest Territories</i>. University of Manitoba Press, 2024: 97- 127</p>
November 9	Indigenous Activism and the Red Power Movement	<p>Sarah A. Nickel, “Our Shared Struggles:’</p>

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		Indigenous Women's Rights and Transracial Coalition-Building during International Women's Year, 1975" in <i>Active Women: Indigenous Women's Social and Political Work in Kanata's West</i> . University of Toronto Press, 2025: 143-164
November 16	The <i>Constitution Act</i> and the Supreme Court	Joel Hebert, "Sacred Trust: Rethinking Late British Decolonization in Indigenous Canada," <i>Journal of British Studies</i> 58, 3 (2019): 565- 597
November 23	The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples	Guest Speaker – Brett Forester, CBC Indigenous Primary Source Reading: CSIS Activities Regarding Native Canadians – Secret File No. 2800-10/1, 30 January 1991
November 30	The Establishment of Nunavut	Graham White, "We, the Inuit of Labrador: Balancing Inuit and Western Traditions in the Nunatsiavut Constitution," <i>Journal of Canadian Studies</i> 55 (1), (2021): 88-117
December 7	An Era of Reconciliation	Report of the Permanent Peoples' Tribunal on Canadian Human Rights Violations Associated with Indigenous Peoples, 2026

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Additional Statements

Communication policies: The best way to communicate with me is by emailing cgroat@uwo.ca. I will respond within 48 hours on weekdays but might take longer on weekends. If students have questions about the assignments or course content, they are encouraged to attend my office hours.

Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI): You may use generative AI tools, such as ChatGPT, in this course for activities such as grammatical copyediting but not for generating ideas or writing. All writing submitted in this course must be your own. Any other use is considered a form of academic misconduct, which can result in further penalties from the university, and will result in a failed assignment. All assignments must include an AI statement disclosing how and if you used AI in your assignment, including any prompts that you used. This statement does not count towards the page count for your assignment.

When considering if you should use AI, please acknowledge the significant environmental impact that this has and the ways that it contributes to ongoing environmental destruction.

Additional Western Policies: 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.