

**UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY  
FACULTY OF ARTS  
DEPARTMENT OF CLASSICS AND RELIGION**

**COURSE OUTLINE – Winter 2017**

**Course:** RELS 373.11 Indigenous Worldviews and Spirituality

**Instructor:** Dr. Chris Daniels

**Office:** TBA

**Office Hours:** Tuesdays 1:00-2:00 pm

**E-mail:** chris.daniels@ucalgary.ca

**Telephone:** 403-220-5612 or 403-220-5886 (main office)

**Required Readings:**

*Process-Relational Philosophy*, by Robert Mesle

*Tsawalk: A Nuu-chah-nulth Worldview*, by E. Richard Atleo

*Blackfoot Physics: A Journey into the Native American Worldview* by F. David Peat

*Posted on D2L as required*

**Recommended Text**

*Native Science: Natural Laws of Interdependence* by Gregory Cajete

*The Way We Used To Live*, by Vine Deloria Jr.

*Blackfoot Ways of Knowing*, by Betty Bastien

**Course Description**

There appears to be a significant difference in worldviews and ways of gaining knowledge between the dominant Euro-American society and that of the world's Indigenous cultures. Why are Indigenous beliefs and practices so fundamentally different than ours? Why do their narratives so often sound like fantasy from the Western perspective? Why do Indigenous priorities so often conflict with the Western societal norm? Is it really just that they are unscientific? This course is an investigation into the relational and experiential worldviews and ways-of-knowing foundational to the beliefs and practices of many of the world's Indigenous traditions. It will also discuss particular Indigenous communities' social and spiritual beliefs and practices to determine whether they are consistent with these alternative ways of understanding the world. The first part of the course will focus on definitions of what it means to be Indigenous and how a relational worldview fundamentally differs from the dominant "Western" perspective. The second part will compare the Indigenous position described by Indigenous and non-Indigenous writers to select contemporary and traditional relational views of reality through student research and presentations.

**Online elements for this course:**

All online elements of this course will require access to D2L and the library databases.

**Core Competencies:**

Students in this class will have the opportunity to learn about alternative worldview perspectives.

In so doing they will gain critical reading and thinking skills. They will also begin to acquire abilities that contribute to clear and concise writing, research, and communication. Skills and understanding acquired in this course will have relevance in upper level courses in the Arts, as well as in wider academic, career, and social settings. Knowledge acquired in this course will help students reflect and converse more clearly and critically on a variety of multicultural issues.

**Tentative Course Requirements:**

	Assessment	Weight (%)
Mid Term 1	February 9	20%
Mid Term 2	March 9	20%
Participation	Ongoing	10%
Research Essay	Term paper	25%
Research Presentation	Summary and Presentation	15%
Final Presentation Exam	April 13	10%

**Written Assignments and Presentation:**

The written assignments will both be associated with the student research and presentation. The main essay paper will be a 10 page research report that will be due the week following the student presentation and will reflect both the student research and any new information or discussion that the presentation generated. The other will be a 3-4 page summary of the student’s research which will also constitute the in-class presentation. It will be due on the day of the student’s presentation. The research paper will be on an indigenous culture of the students choosing and how particular beliefs and practices may or may not reflect the relational perspective we are discussing in class. The presentation will be a short presentation on at least one of those beliefs or practices. More detail will be discussed in class and a writing guide will be made available.

**Participation:** There will be an expectation of engagement and participation in class and group discussions, especially during student research presentations.

**Exams:** The first midterm will include all readings, lectures, and discussion to date. The second will focus on the information since the first exam. The exam on final day of the term will be on information presented in the student presentations and subsequent discussions. There will be no registrar scheduled final exam.

**Grading**

A numerical mark will be given for each course requirement. A letter grade will be assigned on the following number and letter grade scheme.

A+	100 - 96	A	95 - 90	A-	89 - 85
B+	84 - 80	B	79 - 75	B-	74 - 70
C+	69 - 65	C	64 - 60	C-	59 - 55
D+	54 - 53	D	52-50	F	Under 50

N.B. All written assignments will be graded with regard to both form and content.

**Policy with regard to missed assignments/assessments:**

Test dates are firm. Without acceptable documentation (i.e. medical certificate, police report, bereavement notice, confirmation of religious observance, or court summons), missed assessments will be awarded a 0 (zero). Late written assignments will be assessed a 5%/day grade deduction.

This policy is intended to encourage diligence and integrity among students as well as to uphold principles of fairness and equality with respect to other students in the class. Excuses other than those listed above will receive little attention.

**Expectations for student conduct in this course:**

This course is designed for critical thinking and investigation of sensitive topics. Students will be expected to treat other students and the instructor with respect. Aggressive or disrespectful behavior will not be tolerated.

**Electronic Device Policy:**

Laptops are permitted only for the purpose of taking notes and for assignments. No electronics devices are allowed to be used in class for emailing, facebook, videos, texting, games, etc. Students that distract other students or the instructor with unauthorized use of electronic devices will be asked to leave the classroom.

**Academic Honesty**

Plagiarism is not tolerated at the University of Calgary and has serious consequences. Your essays/presentations must be your own work and inadequate referencing may be seen as plagiarism. Please see the relevant sections on Academic Misconduct in the current University Calendar (section K, which can be found here:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html>). If you have questions about correct referencing, please consult your instructor, or librarian staff.

**Student Accommodations**

Students seeking an accommodation based on disability or medical concerns should contact Student Accessibility Services; SAS will process the request and issue letters of accommodation to instructors. For additional information on support services and accommodations for students with disabilities, visit [www.ucalgary.ca/access/](http://www.ucalgary.ca/access/).

Students who require an accommodation in relation to their coursework based on a protected ground other than disability should communicate this need in writing to their Instructor.

The full policy on Student Accommodations is available at

[http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy\\_0.pdf](http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy_0.pdf).

**Desire 2 Learn (D2L) Help**

Go to <http://elearn.ucalgary.ca/desire2learn/home/students> for Student Help and FAQ's about D2L. Troubleshooting tips and a tutorial are also available on this website.

**Faculty of Arts Program Advising and Student Information Resources**

- For program planning and advice, students in the Faculty of Arts will contact The Arts Students' Centre (ASC). Drop in at SS102, call at 403-220-3580 or email at

[ascarts@ucalgary.ca](mailto:ascarts@ucalgary.ca). You can also visit the Faculty of Arts website at <http://arts.ucalgary.ca/undergraduate> which has detailed information on common academic concerns.

- For registration (add/drop/swap), paying fees and assistance with your Student Centre, contact Enrolment Services at (403) 210-ROCK [7625] or visit them at the MacKimmie Library.

### **Freedom of Information and Privacy**

This course is conducted in accordance with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIPP): <http://www.ucalgary.ca/secretariat/privacy>

The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act indicates that assignments given by you to your course instructor will remain confidential unless otherwise stated before submission. The assignment cannot be returned to anyone else without your express permission. Similarly, any information about yourself that you share with your course instructor will not be given to anyone else without your permission. As one consequence, students should identify themselves on all written work by placing their name on the front page and their ID number on each subsequent page.

### **Student Ombudsperson and Students' Union Representative**

The Student Ombuds Office provides independent, impartial and confidential support for students who require assistance and advice in addressing issues and concerns related to their academic careers. See [www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds](http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds) for more information.

The Students' Union Faculty of Arts representative can be reached at [arts1@ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts1@ucalgary.ca).

### **Emergency Evacuation Assembly Point**

In case of an emergency evacuation during class, students must gather at the designated assembly point nearest to the classroom. The list of assembly points is found at [www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints](http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints). Please check this website and not the nearest assembly point for this course.

### **Safewalk**

The Safewalk program provides volunteers to walk students safely to their destination anywhere on campus (including McMahon Stadium, Health Sciences, Student Family Housing, the Alberta Children's Hospital and the University LRT station). This service is free and available to students, staff and campus visitors 24 hrs/day, 365 days a year. Call 403-220-5333 or use one of the Help phones located throughout campus to request a walk.