

UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

FACULTY OF ARTS

INDG 399.05

Special Topic in International Indigenous Studies
International Indigenous Film

Fall 2012

Aruna Srivastava

Phone: (403) 220-4663

E-mail: asrivast@ucalgary.ca

Office hours: Mondays 3-5pm or any afternoon by appointment

Course website: blackboard.ucalgary.ca (or access through myUofC)

Course description and objectives:

Calendar description: Selected themes in International Indigenous studies. May focus on Indigenous peoples of only one country.

This course will examine the burgeoning and increasingly accessible field of international indigenous film, video and digital media production, with a special emphasis on film produced outside Canada. We will explore such issues as the representations of indigenous peoples in relation to colonial ideologies, how indigenous filmmakers are using film to convey indigenous ways of knowing, and we will engage in concepts of identity, decolonization, sovereignty, community and relationship-building. We will examine issues of “authorship” in media production (i.e. what exactly constitutes “indigenous film”?), as well as aspects of film theory that will enable us to view films from a critical perspective.

You will find many aspects of this course challenging, in that the content and form of the media are often unfamiliar, as well as the political contexts and histories that inform them. These challenges will make the course research-intensive, as we attempt to fill in “knowledge gaps” about indigenous people’s histories, art forms and current realities. In addition, one of the demanding elements of this course is consistent (and constant) reflection and critique, which many feel to be essential in learning (and unlearning) what we know or think we know about indigenous peoples at home and around the world.

This is a blended-learning, inquiry-based course, and requires that you contribute significantly and consistently both online and in class (this is the reason for the reduced class hours). As well as viewing films in class, you may view many films/videos through the media library at TFDL, by borrowing films from me, by renting them from the few remaining city video stores or borrowing from the public library, and by watching them online or on television. That is, access to the films, video, and TV production will not be difficult.

This course will be made up of class meetings, a large amount of independent as well as collaborative research work, and a good deal of reflection, a good deal of it online. Attendance in all aspects of the class is therefore a must. We may not meet for every class session if we find that more online or smaller group meeting time is required. Please see links provided during the term for information on blended and inquiry-based learning, readings, course material, details on scheduling and assignments.

Course material:

Most of what we discuss will be film/video screenings in and out of class time, to be determined by students and instructor. Many suggested titles are already provided online. We begin with Alanis Obomsawin's documentary, *Professor Norman Cornett: "Since when do we divorce the right answer from an honest answer?"* (National Film Board of Canada, 2009). http://www.nfb.ca/film/professor_norman_cornett/.

In addition to digital and film media, there will be a reference list of readings provided on Blackboard. Online and in-class presentations will be based on these readings and on film viewing. Please check Blackboard regularly (an absolute minimum of twice a week) for announcements about screenings, assignments and course material.

Assignments and Evaluation:

Learning log and reflective journal with critique	30%
Group project	20%
Class participation	20%
Portfolio	30%
End-of-term discussion with Aruna	ungraded but required
Total	100%

Please make note of the following:

- ★ You must complete **all** assignments to receive a passing grade on the course.
- ★ There is no final examination in this course.
- ★ You may submit most of your assignments electronically, but *not by e-mail*. This regulation is for your protection and my sanity: mainly, we cannot be certain that your e-mails will not be hijacked by U of C's spam filter. Submit them through the Blackboard digital dropbox, and according to instructions provided.
- ★ If you are submitting something in print and cannot get it to me, e-mail me to tell me that you have handed in your assignment, keeping cautionary note about spam filters in mind. It is your responsibility to keep a copy of all assignments in case of loss by any cause. A daytime drop box is available in SS102. A night drop box is also available for after-hours submission. Assignments will be removed the following morning, stamped with the previous day's date, and placed in the instructor's mailbox. If your work does not fit in the dropbox, you must make arrangements with me for delivery.
- ★ Guidelines for and discussion about all assignments and tasks will be provided on Blackboard, much of it from the beginning of term. Please read these carefully and ask *lots of questions* if they are not clear. I use these assignment criteria, largely, for assessment. Deadlines and extension policies are also posted on Bb. Thoroughly familiarize yourself with them.
- ★ You may submit to me an altered version of this grade breakdown at the end of term. You may not, however, *subtract more than 5% from any component of the course or add 10% to any component* (for example, you could take 5% from your participation and journal grades, if they were lower, and add them to your portfolio grade, if it was higher). Any revision to your final breakdown must be submitted in writing (not e-mailed) and signed to indicate your agreement to an alternate breakdown. If you do not submit a

revised breakdown of assignments, each component of the course will be weighted as listed above.

Grading system:

A+	95-100 (97.5)	C+	66-69 (67.5)
A	90-94 (92)	C	62-65 (63.5)
A-	85-89 (87)	C-	58-61 (59.5)
B+	80-84 (82)	D+	54-57 (55.5)
B	75-79 (77)	D	50-53 (51.5)
B-	70-74 (72)	F	0-49 (24.5 or 0 if you have not submitted the assignment)

Although final grades are eventually converted to the 4-point system by the university, these are the grade ranges and specific numeric values I assign to letter grades in my grading program. Any individual assignment grade is converted to the mid-point value of the grade range (the number in brackets). I arrive at your final mark by looking at what grade range the total of your assignment scores falls within. A borderline assignment grade is assigned a number that will place it between two grade ranges (e.g. 89.5 for a borderline A/A- grade). If your *final* grade falls on the numeric borderline between two grade ranges, I round up (e.g. 84.6 would be an A-).

Brief notes on course practices and policies

★*Extensions and late work:* Please familiarize yourself with my extension policy (provided on Blackboard).

★*Communicating by e-mail and office hours:* Please do not expect instant responses to your e-mails (give me at least 24 hours). I do not normally check e-mail on weekends, although as this class falls on a Monday, I will sometimes do so. Please identify yourself in your e-mails, and add the course number to the subject line (or e-mail me from Blackboard). I expect to meet with you all in person and get to know you. I am available at times that are convenient to you; it is your responsibility to arrange something with me. I am happy to meet with people in groups. Please talk to me if you have questions or concerns about the course or course material or your progress in it.

★*Internet and electronic communication device information:* This is a blended learning course and as such will require you to make use of laptops, computers, and labs, and to keep in touch with me and your colleagues regularly. During class, you are not required to have a computer with you; others in class certainly will share theirs for collaborative research purposes. I may reserve the right to limit the use of computers or smartphones if they get distracting.

Please read important information below

Plagiarism

Using any source whatsoever without clearly documenting it is a serious academic offense. Consequences include failure on the assignment, failure in the course and possibly suspension or expulsion from the university. <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k-2-1.html>

You must document not only direct quotations but also paraphrases and ideas where they appear in your text. A reference list at the end is insufficient by itself. Readers must be able to tell exactly where your words and ideas end and other people's words and ideas begin. This includes assignments submitted in non-

traditional formats such as Web pages or visual media, and material taken from such sources. Please consult your instructor if you have any questions regarding how to document sources.

Grade appeals

Consult the following University Calendar links. Please note that “mere dissatisfaction with a decision is not sufficient grounds for the appeal of a grade or other academic decision.”

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/i.html>

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act

This course is conducted in accordance with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIP). As one consequence, *students should identify themselves on all written work by using their ID number. Also you will be required to provide a piece of picture identification in order to pick up an assignment or look at a final exam.*

For more information see also <http://www.ucalgary.ca/legalservices/foip/>.

Academic Misconduct

For information on academic misconduct and the consequences thereof please see the current University of Calgary Calendar at the following link: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html>

Academic Accommodation Policy

If you are a student with a disability who may require academic accommodation, it is your responsibility to register with the Disability Resource Centre (220-8237) and discuss your needs with your instructor no later than fourteen (14) days after the start of the course. For further information, please see

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/drc>

Emergency Evacuation and Assembly points

Please note the evacuation points for this particular classroom. All classrooms on campus exit to specific places in case of emergency. The emergency assembly points differ depending upon where your classroom is located. For information on the emergency evacuation procedures and the assembly points see

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints>

"SAFEWALK" Program

Campus Security will escort individuals day or night -- call 403-220-5333 for assistance. Use any campus phone, emergency phone or the yellow phone located at most parking lot booths.

Student Representation

There are four Arts reps, with the email addresses being arts1@su.ucalgary.ca, arts2@su.ucalgary.ca, arts3@su.ucalgary.ca, and arts4@su.ucalgary.ca. Please contact if you have questions related to Students Union matters, events, or concerns.

For your student ombudsman, please see

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds>

Faculty of Arts Program Advising and Student Information Resources

- Have a question, but not sure where to start? The new Faculty of Arts Program Information Centre (PIC) is your information resource for everything in Arts! Drop in at SS102, call us at 403-220-3580 or email us at artsads@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 program planning and advice, contact the Student Success Centre (formerly the Undergraduate programs Office) at (403) 220-5881 or visit them on the 3rd Floor of the Taylor Family Digital Library
- 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 Block 117.

