Course Description and Objectives:

The main purpose of this course is to introduce students to the complex set of relationships established historically between First Nations and the Crown/Canadian Government. The contemporary interactions can be considered modern in that it is vested in law, bureaucratic structures, economic development, natural resource exploration and sociocultural innovation. The results of these diversified types of relations deserve to be treated as a cumulative set of transformations and adaptations after centuries of interactions between the colonial power and First Nations. Even though these interactions have severely affected “traditional” lifeways, First Nation communities participate in conscious political discourses that actively have formed, and continue to form, an indigenous comprehension of contemporary issues.

The course comprises two parts. The first is a review of the colonial system imposed on First Nations and how these initiatives were efficient in terms of dispossessing First Nations of their lands, leading to treaty signing, economic separation from the Canadian society, and policies of assimilation. The first part also examines the consequences of these policies to the formation of a “theory of Aboriginal rights” and the notion of “Aboriginal title”. The second part is composed of case studies, historical and contemporary dealing with the colonization legacy and reflecting on the recent forms that the Canadian Government and the post-colonial ideologies develop their thinking vis-à-vis the place of the First Nations within Canada. The focus of the course will give preference to explore the indigenous understandings of the relationship with Canada. By the end of the course, successful students should be able to articulate the main issues regarding the legal history of Canada and associate such issues to the contemporary relationships between First Nations and the State.

Course Readings:

Asch, Michael (ed.)


In addition there are a number of articles and book chapters that are required reading and are listed below for each week. All are available electronically on-line.
Course Requirements and Grading:

Graded assignments include the following:

- **Class Participation**
  5% of course grade

- **Learning Journals**
  25% of course grade

- **Group Presentation**
  30% of course grade

- **Take-Home Final Exam**
  40% of course grade

**Class Participation** – Reading (sometimes a lot) and attendance are critical to achieve a satisfactory grade and learning objectives in this course. Students are required to critically read all assigned materials prior to class and participate actively (in your own way) in class discussions and assignments.

**Learning Journals** are intended to help you and the instructor to monitor the progress of your learning during the course of the semester. The learning journals will consist of a collection of “Ah-ha!” moments or interesting questions/comments you may have had about the reading materials. These moments can happen both in and out of class when something happens to elucidate our comprehension of a subject; they make us look at something in a different way, or suddenly help us connect ideas or topics that previously had no connection in our minds. Such moments can occur while reading, attending class, participating in a non-course related activity, talking or listening to someone, writing, dreaming or simply thinking. The idea is that students bring to their daily lives’ routines and observations some of the concepts and situations discussed in class. Students are expected to send electronically to the instructor their journals before the second class of each week. It is recommended that you have with you a hard copy so you can present your ideas to the class in the days you are assigned to. Learning journals will not be returned to the students.

Each week we will have four students presenting their journals to the class and we will have an open discussion of the main topics. Each student is expected to present their journals at least twice during the semester.

**Group Presentation** – There will be a handout explaining in details this assignment.

**Take-Home Final Exam** – Students will be given a take-home exam covering the material discussed during the course. Typically, the exams will contain a number of questions, normally essay questions, and students you will be given some choice regarding which questions to answer.
Policies and Procedures:

Attendance:

Students are expected to attend all classes, and actively participate in discussions in order to earn a satisfactory grade.

Grading Policy:

Assignments will be evaluated primarily on the basis of a student’s understanding of the material presented in the course. Other factors that figure in evaluation of assignments include creative and critical insight, and writing (clarity, coherence, and organization).

General Course Policies:

Students are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity.

1. Avoid disrupting class by arriving late, leaving early, and/or allowing your cell phone to sound in class. Repeated disruptions will result first in a warning and then in a 5% penalty to the student’s final grade. If the student’s behaviour is disturbing the learning environment of the class he or she will be asked to leave if the behaviour continues. If you have to leave early inform the instructor in the beginning of the class.

2. It is expected that students will be respectful of their fellow students, their instructor, and cultures and traditions which are not their own.

3. Plagiarism consists of passing off as one’s own the ideas, words, writings, etc., that belong to someone else. In accordance with this definition, you are committing plagiarism if you copy the work of another person and turn it in as your own, even if you should have the permission of that person. This is serious issue. Violation of the university’s policy will result in a grade penalty or failure of the course. This type of violation will stay in your academic record.

4. The final date to drop the course is November 7, 2016.

5. Students are responsible for taking their own lecture notes. Course outline, journal articles and book chapters will be posted online on Desire2Learn at least one week prior to the due date. All the course readings aside from the textbooks will be provided as scanned PDF documents, posted on Desire2Learn. Power Point Presentations will be posted online as well.

6. The main communication tool between the instructor and students is Lakehead University’s e-mail account. Students are asked to check regularly (including before the class) their LakeheadU e-mail account and Desire2Learn for unforeseen changes to the class due to weather conditions or other reasons. Students can reasonably expect a response in 1-2 days.

7. Students are welcome to schedule personal appointments to discuss any topic related to their academic progress or course content.

8. This syllabus is subject to minor changes during the course of the semester.
Course Schedule

Week 1
(Sept-7)
Course Outline Presentation

Week 2
(Sept-12)
(Sept-14)
The Royal Proclamation and the Indian Act


Week 3
(Sept-19)
(Sept-21)
Historical Treaties – I


Week 4
(Sept-26)
(Sept-28)
Historical Treaties – II


**Week 5**  
**Aboriginal Rights and the Justice System: Critical Approaches**


**Week 6**  
**(No Class: Family Day & Study Week, Oct 10-14)**

**Week 7**  
**(Group Presentations)**

**Week 8**  
**Aboriginal Title and Modern Treaties**


**Week 9**  
**Case Study I: Northern Ontario and Natural Resource Development**


**Week 10**  
**Case Study II: Fishing Rights and Traditional Ecological Knowledge**


**Week 11**  
**Case Study III: Contemporary Land Conflicts, Development and Resource Management**

(Nov-14)  
(Nov-16)


**Week 12**  
**Culture, Citizenship and Identity**

(Nov-21)  
(Nov-23)


**Week 13**  
**Self-governance and Ethnic Nationalism**

(Nov-28)  
(Nov-30)  


Desire2Learn

The course uses Desire2Learn for its course website. To access the course website, or any other Desire2Learn-based course website, go to the LU portal login page at https://lakeheadu.desire2learn.com/ and log in using your LU username and password. Once you have logged in to the portal, look for the mycourselink module, where you’ll find the link to our course website along with the link to all other Desire2Learn-based courses you are registered.

Accessibility Needs

Lakehead University 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 Student Accessibility Services as soon as possible.