Welcome to Global Indigenous Feminisms. In this course we will examine how Indigenous feminisms cut across boundaries of nation, language, and culture. They respond to women’s shared experiences under the combined effects of colonization and patriarchy to address issues particular to Indigenous women’s lives in settler-colony countries. We will consider Indigenous feminisms in relation to political eras, legislation, and social practices in various countries, including Canada (Aboriginal peoples), America (Native American/Native Indian peoples), New Zealand (Māori peoples), Sápmi/Samiland (Sami peoples), Mexico (Mexican Indians/Indigenous peoples of Mexico), Australia (Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander peoples), and more. We will also consider how Indigenous women resist colonial domination and work toward decolonization and cultural revitalization.

Required Text (available at the bookstore)
Other texts and optional readings will be posted on our D2L website.

Assignments/Marks Breakdown

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Guiding Questions for our Course

1. What are Indigenous feminisms?
2. Why is an understanding of colonialism central to an understanding of patriarchy?
3. What are the varying positions of Indigenous women activists and scholars in regard to feminism, and what is the rationale behind these positions?
4. What are some of the colonial practices (e.g., legislation, colonization, political ideologies, and social practices) that have impacted Indigenous women?
5. How have these colonial practices impacted Indigenous women’s status and gender roles in their communities?
6. How are Indigenous women resisting colonial domination and violence?

Course Website
We will use a D2L website for course-related materials and announcements. Please get in the habit of checking our site regularly throughout the term.

Assignment Descriptions

Class Participation (10%)
This course will be structured around engaged learning experiences. During our classes we will work together to explore and understand Indigenous feminist writings regarding identity, relationship with feminism, lives and livelihoods, resistance to colonization, and more. We will also learn from watching documentaries, hearing guest speakers, participating in lectures and classroom activities, and listening/learning from each other.

Your participation in this class means more than just attending; it means coming to class with an openness to engage. Your final class participation mark will be based on various indicators of your engagement, including your attendance, participation in class discussions and class activities, evidence that you are doing the readings (and meaningfully participating in discussions about them), and respectfully being “present.” You will have an opportunity to self-evaluate on the final day of the class, and your feedback will be taken into consideration for your mark.

Note: If you will be missing more than two classes during the term, please provide appropriate documentation so that your participation mark is not compromised. In this situation we can discuss ways for you to make up for missed classes.
Response to a Guiding Question of our Course (25%) – due October 7

On page 2 of this syllabus are six guiding questions for our course. Select one question and express your response to it in a format of your choosing. For example, you may wish to write a paper in traditional (or untraditional) format, create a series of visual images with text, draw a detailed mindmap, record a video or audio-recording, create artwork with an accompanying written statement, or engage in any other mode of expression you are drawn to. You will draw on course texts and materials, as appropriate, to respond to your question. We will discuss parameters for this assignment further in class. We will also allocate time for sharing our responses.

Spotlight on an Indigenous Feminist Organization or Movement:
Paper and Presentation (25%) – due dates TBD

For this assignment, research an example of Indigenous feminism in action in the world today, write a short paper about it, and share your findings with the class. This assignment can be completed alone or in pairs.

First, research an organization, a movement, or an individual or small group of people working toward decolonization/social change for Indigenous women and peoples. Some possible examples are: the Native Women’s Association of Canada, Sisters in Spirit, the IdleNoMore movement, Ontario Native Women’s Association, the WomenSpirit Coalition, the International Indigenous Women’s Forum, Mending the Sacred Hoop organization, Aboriginal Women’s Action Network, and women’s involvement in the Zapatista Movement. There are many possibilities (and many outlined in our course text). We will coordinate a “sign-up” in class so there is no overlap.

Next, write a 2-3 page paper (if working alone) or a 4-5 page paper (working in pairs) that explains the Indigenous feminist organization or movement’s goals, raison d’etre, activism, programming (if applicable), audiences, challenges, victories, and any other relevant details.

Third, prepare a brief discussion or presentation (6 minutes maximum) to share your research with the class. You can use a PowerPoint or Prezi to visually communicate ideas, but it is recommended that you work with 5 or less slides/screens to keep to time. We will further discuss guidelines for both the paper and presentation in class.

Paper and presentation due dates: Three days of classes have been set aside for sharing: October 21, November 4, and November 25. We will determine who will present when during the second or third week of class.
Reading Response Journal (40%) – due November 18
For this assignment, keep an ongoing journal in which you reflect on the course readings, summarize them, and document your responses to them. You are asked to complete six journal entries throughout the course, with each entry being approximately 2 typed pages (maximum).

For each journal entry, provide a brief (maximum .5 page) summary of the reading under consideration. Identify the primary claim that the author is making, and how she is supporting or developing her ideas. Then, respond to the reading by outlining your response. Some questions you might consider for your response are: What have you learned from this reading? What ideas and/or feelings, or questions and concerns, were stirred up by it? What was comfortable and known? What was not? How might your positionality (e.g., your identity, context, academic and/or professional background) have influenced your response?

Your reading response journal will be evaluated based on the quality of your writing, depth of engagement, originality, and evidence of critical analysis and self-reflexivity. In particular I will consider two questions in my evaluation: (1) is it convincing that the readings were done? and (2) has considered thought, rather than superficial thought, been applied? (For example, superficial thought = “I really enjoyed reading about Indigenous women and feminism” or “I learned a lot from the chapter.” Considered thought goes into more reflective detail, grappling with key ideas in the text and with argument and/or evaluation and/or interpretation of the discussion.)

Due date: Your reading response journal is due November 18, but you can submit it earlier if you wish. You are encouraged to complete journal entries as the course progresses, selecting a diversity of readings. There will be an opportunity for you to get feedback on your journal halfway through the course (e.g., after you have completed three entries), if you’d like.

Bonus Marks! You can earn bonus marks in this course by participating in Indigenous cultural events that take place during the term (from September-end of November 2016), and handing in a short write-up about your experiences and learning. A maximum of 2% can be earned for each event you participate in. One option is to attend the Full Moon Memory Walk on September 16. Please run your ideas by me in advance. We will discuss details about earning bonus marks further in class.
Other Important Course Information

Assignment due dates: All assignments must be handed in at the beginning of class on the due dates, or as negotiated in our D2L Dropbox. If you have trouble meeting a due date, please discuss it with me at least one week prior to your due date and, if accepted, we will negotiate a new contract for a due date. Missing due dates without prior approval will result in a deduction of 5% per day.

Academic dishonesty and plagiarism: Plagiarism is a serious academic offence. Presenting an idea, words, or an exact phrase of another author as your own work constitutes plagiarism. All students are required to know what constitutes plagiarism and how to avoid it. Please review the university guidelines at https://www.lakeheadu.ca/academics/academic-support/skills-for-success/responsibilities, or speak with the professor. All cases of plagiarism will be dealt with in accordance with the Code of Student Behaviour and Disciplinary Procedures approved by Senate and the Board of Governors. Other instances of Academic Dishonesty, including but not limited to double submission, purchasing of assignments (either online or from another student on campus), or copying of assignments will also dealt with in accordance to the University regulations on Academic Dishonesty. Please do your own work.

Respectful conduct: Everyone is expected to foster an atmosphere of respect which includes, but is not limited to, open-mindedness, listening attentively, not speaking over or for others, and avoiding all forms of harassment and discrimination. Please not that the material covered in this class may not always be “comfortable,” so we must be prepared to challenge and be challenged, to be critical and to be critiqued, and to support and to be supported. We may not always agree with each other. However, it is essential that we enter our conversations with generosity of spirit, good humour, and high regard for each other.

Reduce, re-use, recycle: Cover pages are not necessary in this course – simply write your name and the date on the top of the first page. If you can print your assignments double-sided without too much hassle, please do.

Student Success Centre: Help regarding academic matters can be found at the Student Success Centre. Phone 343-8018. http://academicadvising.lakeheadu.ca/

Student Accessibility Services: For assistance with accommodations for a disability, please visit Student Accessibility Services. Phone 343-8047. https://www.lakeheadu.ca/faculty-and-staff/departments/services/sas

Student Health and Counselling Centre: For help with personal and/or medical issues, please visit the Student Health and Counselling Centre. Phone 343-8361. http://healthservices.lakeheadu.ca/
Course Readings by Week

Please come to class having already read the assigned readings each week. Additional readings, links to documentaries, and other course materials will be posted on our D2L website.

Part 1: Exploring Indigenous Feminisms

**September 7, 9:** What Do We Mean by Indigenous Feminisms?
Introduction: Indigenous Feminism: From Symposium to Book (Joyce Green)
Chapter 1: Taking Account of Aboriginal Feminism (Joyce Green)

**September 14:** Relationships with Feminism
Chapter 2: Feminism is for Everybody: Aboriginal Women, Feminism, and Diversity (Verna St. Denis)

**September 21, 23:** Gender Roles in Indigenous Communities
Chapter 11: Yes, My Daughters: We Are Cherokee Women (Denise K. Henning)
Chapter 12: Culturing Politics and Politicizing Culture (Shirley Bear)


**September 28, 30:** The 60s Scoop and Stolen Generations
Film: Stolen Generations (to be viewed in class)

**October 5, 7:** Legislating Colonization
Chapter 15: A Métis Feminist in Indian Rights for Indian Women, 1973-1979 (Colleen Glenn with Joyce Green)
Chapter 8: Balancing Strategies Aboriginal Women and Constitutional Rights in Canada (Joyce Green)

**October 19, 21:** Sexism and Sovereignty
Chapter 5: Native American Feminism, Sovereignty and Social Change (Andrea Smith)
Chapter 7: Practising Indigenous Feminism: Resistance to Imperialism (Makere Stewart-Harawira)

**October 26, 28:** Violence and Resistance
Chapter 14: Aboriginal Feminist Action on Violence against Women (Tina Beads/Rauna Kuokkanen)
Chapter 16: Sharon McIvor: Woman of Action (Sharon McIvor)

Note: Friday, September 16 is the Full Moon Memory Walk. Please attend if you can.

Response to a Guiding Question due October 7

Spotlight Presentations Part 1: October 21
Part 3: Decolonization and Revitalization

November 2, 4: Traditional Lives and Livelihoods
Chapter 13: My Hometown Northern Canada South Africa (Emma LaRoque)
Chapter 4: Myths and Realities of Sami Women: A Post-Colonial Feminist Analysis for the Decolonization and Transformation of Sami Society (Rauna Kuokkanen)

November 9, 11: Gender, Land and Mother Earth
Chapter 6: Gender Essentialism and Feminism in Samiland (Jorunn Eijok)

November 16, 18: Reclaiming Heritage
Chapter 9: Looking Back, Looking Forward (Shirley Green)
Chapter 10: Maori Women and Leadership in Aotearoa/New Zealand (Kathie Irwin)

November 23, 25: Decolonizing Academia
Chapter 3: Métis and Feminist: Ethical Reflections on Feminism, Human Rights and Decolonization (Emma LaRoque)

November 30, December 2: Course wrap-up and celebration