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Instructor Information

- Instructor: Dr. Judith Leggatt
- Office: RB 3041
- Telephone: (807) 343-8286
- Email: jleggatt@lakeheadu.ca
- Office Hours: Wednesdays and Fridays 10-11am.

Course Description

In this course, we will study the ways in which Indigenous writers use traditional trickster figures in contemporary literary and cultural storytelling genres. We will begin with an examination of a traditional trickster cycle. We will then move on to contemporary Indigenous literature, which we will study in the context of a variety of anthropological, cultural, nationalist, aesthetic and literary theories about tricksters.

Course Resources

Required Books (available at the bookstore)

Other Readings (available in the course binder in the Grad Office)
Texts marked with an * are recommended; all others are required.


**Course Website**

There is a Desire2Learn site for the course, where you can post and access seminar discussion questions and find course materials, such as this outline.

**Course Schedule**

Texts marked with an * are recommended; all others are required.

**January 10: Introduction**

Course Outline

Thomas King, “What is it About Us that You Don’t Like”

**January 17: An Anthropological Approach**

Paul Radin, *The Trickster: A Study in American Indian Mythology.* (You will be responsible for reading “Prefatory Note” (xxiii-xxv), “The Winnebago Trickster Cycle” (1-60), and “The Nature and Meaning of the Myth” (111-169))

*Barbara Babcock-Abrahams, "'A Tolerated Margin of Mess': The Trickster and His Tales Reconsidered." (photocopy)*

**January 24: The Committee to Re-Establish the Trickster**

Lenore Keeshig-Tobias, “Trickster Beyond 1992: Our Relationship.” (photocopy) and “Let’s Be Our Own Trickster’s Eh.” (Troubling Tricksters 317-318)

Daniel David Moses, “The Trickster’s Laugh: My Meeting with Tomson and Lenore” (photocopy)

Wigston, Nancy. “Nanabush in the City.” (photocopy)

*Margery Fee “The Trickster Moment, Cultural Appropriation and the Liberal Imagination in Canada” (Troubling Tricksters 59-76)*

**January 31: Trickster Discourse**
Gerald Vizenor, “Almost Browne,” “Ice Tricksters,” and “Trickster Discourse.” (photocopy)
*Kimberly Blaeser, “Trickster Signatures” (photocopy)

**February 7: Troubling Tricksters**
Kristina Fagan “What’s the Trouble with the Trickster?” (Troubling Tricksters 3-20)
Niigonwendom Sinclair “Trickster Reflections I” (Troubling Tricksters 21-58) and “Trickster Reflections II” (Troubling Tricksters 239-260)

**February 14: Translating Tricksters: Graphic Texts**
Matt Dembicki, ed. Trickster: Native American Tales A Graphic Collection
*Deanna Reder, “Sacred Stories in Comic Book Form.” (Troubling Tricksters 177-191)

**READING WEEK**

**February 28: Thinking in Binaries**
Tomson Highway, Dry Lips Oughta Move to Kapuskasing and *Comparing Mythologies* (photocopy)

**March 7: Human Tricksters: Silko and Erdrich**
Leslie Marmon Silko, “Coyote Holds a Full House in His Hand,” “Coyotes and the Stro’ro’ka Dancers,” “Toe’osh: A Laguna Coyote Story,” and “In 1918 Franz Boas, ethnomologist and linguist . . .” (photocopy)
*Fitz, Brewster E. "Coyote Loops: Leslie Marmon Silko Holds A Full House In Her Hand." Louise Erdrich, “Love Medicine” (photocopy)
*Jeanne Rosier Smith, “Comic Liberators and Word-Healers: The Interwoven Trickster Narratives of Louise Erdrich.” (photocopy)

(March 10: Last day to drop course without academic penalty; not a class day)

**March 14: Postmodernism, Authenticity, and Tricksters**
Thomas King, Green Grass, Running Water and *“How I Spent My Summer Vacation: History, Story and the Cant of Authenticity” (Troubling Tricksters 307-14)
*Carleton Smith, “Coyote, Contigency and Community: Thomas King’s Green Grass, Running Water and Postmodern Trickster.” (photocopy)

**March 21: Sexual Tricksters**
Beth Brant, “Coyote Learns a New Trick.” (photocopy)
*Shane Phelan, “Coyote Politics: Trickster Tales and Feminist Futures.” (photocopy)
Richard van Camp “Why Ravens Smile to Little Old Ladies as They Walk By . . .” (Troubling Tricksters 95-97)
Jennifer Kelly, “Gasp, Snickers, Narrative Tricks, and Deceptive Dominant Ideologies: The Transformative Energies of Richard van Camp’s ‘Why Ravens Smile to Little Old Ladies as They Walk By . . .’ and/in the Classroom.” (Troubling Tricksters 99-123)

**March 28: But you said . . .**
Drew Hayden Taylor, Motorcycles and Sweetgrass and “Acadamia Mania” (photocopy)

**April 4: Conference**
Assignments and Evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due date</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Length</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seminar</td>
<td>As scheduled</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Up to 1 hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responses to Seminar Questions</td>
<td>At start of relevant class.</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>400-600 words each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposal for Major Paper</td>
<td>March 7, 2017</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>1-2 pages + bibliography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral Presentation of Major Paper</td>
<td>April 4, 2017</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>12-15 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major Paper</td>
<td>April 18, 2017</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>3000-5000 words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>Throughout Term</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>throughout</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assignment Policies

- Assignments are due at the beginning of class, except otherwise indicated.
- If you require an extension, you must ask for one BEFORE the due date. Policies for extensions and late penalties vary from assignment to assignment, and are noted in the explanation for each assignment.
- All assignments must be in MLA format (8th edition), double spaced, with 1” margins, and in 12 point font.
- Exceptions to these policies are allowed only with a doctor’s note or other appropriate documentation.

Details of Assignments

Seminar

**Weight:** 20%

**Length:** Up to one hour (including class discussion)

**Due:** As scheduled during the first class; discussion questions due 1 week in advance.

Each student will present a seminar on one of the texts we will study in the course. There is one seminar for every class, except for March 7th, when there is one seminar on Leslie Marmon Silko and one on Louise Erdrich, and March 21st, when there is one seminar on Beth Brant and one on Richard van Camp. You will be responsible for presenting ideas and leading class discussion for one hour. The presentation can be as formal or as informal as you wish, but make sure that any formal reading of a prepared script takes no more than 20 minutes. While presenting your seminar, try to balance providing information to the class with eliciting class discussion (in other words, you can’t rely entirely on the class answering your seminar questions). If you don’t know where to start, come to see me, and I will give you some ideas. The most important thing to remember is that your primary audience is the class, rather than the professor. Make sure you are teaching your classmates, and helping them to better understand the material.
At least one week before your seminar, you will post five discussion questions to the course D2L website, to help your classmates focus their thinking about the readings and prepare for class discussion. The questions should be designed to promote discussion and debate; in other words, they should not be yes/no questions or have only one correct answer. The questions can focus in on the details of the texts and/or place them in the larger context of the course by making comparisons with other classes.

At the end of the class in which you present your seminar, you must hand in your notes for the seminar, which will assist in the marking process. They will not be marked for grammar, and can be in point form so long as they are clear. If you use powerpoint (definitely not required), you will be required to provide a copy for inclusion on the class website.

Secondary sources are not required, though they can be useful, and you should at least address the recommended reading for your seminar topic. Note that any secondary material you use should be clearly cited, both in your written material and in your oral presentation of that material.

Unless you have a documented medical or other emergency, you must present your seminar on the assigned day. Posting your seminar questions late will lead to a 5% penalty per day they are late.

Responses to Seminar Questions
**Weight:** 4 X 5% = 20%
**Length:** 400-600 words each
**Due:** at the start of class on the day the question will be discussed.

Over the course of the semester, students will hand in four brief formal responses to seminar questions. These responses should be well-written, detailed and analytic, and should engage critically with the material. **You may not hand in more than one response paper in any given class, and may not hand in one that responds to your own seminar questions.** There are no extensions on seminar question responses. You should hand in at least two responses by March 7th.

Proposal for Major Paper
**Weight:** 5%
**Length:** 1-2 pages + bibliography
**Due:** March 7, 2017

You will be required to generate your own essay topic within the general themes of the course. Your proposal should clearly state the working thesis of your essay, and briefly outline the argument you will use, which text(s) will be your focus, and how you will situate your argument within relevant theories about tricksters. Use paragraph form, rather than point form, and include a working bibliography indicating all the creative and theoretical texts you plan to use. If you are having difficulty deciding what to write about, I will be happy to help you work through your ideas.

**Unless you ask for (and receive) an extension, late essay proposals will be penalized by 2% per day, and will not be accepted after March 28, 2017.**

Oral Presentation of Major Paper
**Weight:** 10%
**Length:** 12-15 minutes (about 1800-2250 words)
**Due:** April 4th, 2017
On the last class, we will have a conference, in which each member of the class will present a short oral version of his or her paper. Papers will be organized into panels, and there will be a discussion period after each panel. Although you will hand in the material you presented, you will be marked on the paper as you presented it orally, and on how you responded to questions. There are no extensions on the oral presentation.

Major Paper
Weight: 30%
Length: 3000-5000 words
Due: On or before April 18th, 2017.
Write a research paper on your choice of topic within the limits of course content and ideas. You may deal with texts we did not study in class, so long as they are about Indigenous tricksters. Ideally, you should think of this paper as a paper that you will eventually publish, which makes an original contribution to the field, and which situates itself within current academic discourse. Late papers will be penalized 5% per day to a maximum of 20%, and will not be accepted after April 24th, 2014.

Participation
Weight: 15%
Class participation is a necessary and important part of graduate courses, in which we all learn by exchanging ideas and information. As well, since seminars are an important part of the course, it is necessary to your classmate's success that you are ready and willing to contribute in a relevant manner to the discussions they will be leading. Participation will be based on the quality and relevance of your contributions to the discussion, which can include asking questions, making suggestions, providing information, and friendly debates. While disagreement over ideas is encouraged, personal attacks are unacceptable. Make sure you leave room for your classmates to participate too. Attendance is, of course, mandatory for all classes, and absences will adversely affect your participation mark.

Marking Standards
All assignments will be marked in accordance with the English Department Marking Standards.

Plagiarism:
Plagiarism is the unacknowledged use of someone else's words and/or ideas. Not acknowledging your debt to the ideas of a secondary source, failing to use quotation marks when you are quoting directly, buying essays from essay banks, copying another student's work, or working together on an individual assignment, all constitute plagiarism. Resubmitting material you've submitted to another course is also academic dishonesty. All plagiarized work (in whole or in part) and other forms of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Dean, who is responsible for judging academic misconduct and imposing penalties. The minimum penalty for academic misconduct is a 0 on the assignment in question. It might also be subject to more severe academic penalties. See the Code of Student Behaviour.

Course and University Policies
- Attendance is mandatory for all classes.
- Students in this course are expected to conform to the Code of Student Behaviour.
• **Accommodations:** Lakehead University is committed to achieving full accessibility for persons with disabilities in accordance with the terms of the *Ontario Human Rights Code*\(^1\). This occurs through a collaborative process that acknowledges a collective obligation to develop an accessible learning environment that both meets the needs of students and preserves the essential academic requirements of the course. Part of this commitment includes arranging academic accommodations for students with disabilities to ensure they have an equitable opportunity to participate in all of their academic activities. If you think you may need accommodations, you are strongly encouraged to contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS)\(^2\) and register as early as possible.

• This course outline is available online through the *English Department homepage*\(^3\) and/or the *Desire2Learn*\(^4\) site for the course.

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\(^1\) http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/ontario-human-rights-code
\(^2\) http://studentaccessibility.lakeheadu.ca
\(^3\) https://www.lakeheadu.ca/academics/departments/english
\(^4\) https://lakeheadu.desire2learn.com/d2l/home