

Lakehead University
Department of Sociology

Sociology 5111 Problems and Issues in Sociology: Indigeneity and Sociology

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Wednesdays 8:30 to 11:30

Delivery: Zoom

Office Hours

By appointment

Course Objective:

This course is designed to be a critical examination of theoretical problems and issues in sociology. This year we will be looking at the relationship between sociological theory and Indigenous peoples. We will examine the place of Indigeneity in the development of sociological theory and recent attempts to develop theoretical models to better situate Indigenous and non-Indigenous relations in contemporary society. In doing so we will focus on the theoretical model of settler colonialism as developed by theorists such as Patrick Wolfe and Lorenzo Veracini.

Learning Outcomes:

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Describe the place of Indigenous peoples in both classical and contemporary sociological theory.
2. Describe and explain the relationship between Indigenous peoples and theories of colonialism
3. Define settler colonialism and explain how it emerged as a theoretical concept
4. Describe the relationship between settler colonialism and other contemporary sociological theories.
5. Evaluate the usefulness of settler colonialism for understanding the current relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Canada.
6. Collect and evaluate both secondary sources and primary sources in order to address issues and questions related to the relationship between sociology and Indigeneity.

Texts:

There will be no required texts. Students will be required to read articles to be downloaded off the internet.

Basis of Evaluation:

Take-home assignment.....	25%
Participation	15%
Research Proposal.....	10%
Presentation.....	10%
Research Paper.....	40%

Mid-term Assignment: Participants will be given a take home assignment on Feb. 11th to be completed and handed in by Feb. 25th. The assignment will be comprised of a list of short essay questions relating to material dealt with in the first part of the course.

Research Proposal: One of the main requirements of this course is to prepare a research paper on a key question relating to the issue of indigeneity and sociology (if you are not a sociology student your paper can be on indigeneity and the social sciences in general). The paper itself is described below but to ensure that you are prepared to write this paper you will be required to hand in a 4 page (1000 word) proposal on Feb. 25th. This proposal should contain: a background section explaining why the topic you chose is important (why you chose it), a section containing a clear hypothesis/research question, a section describing how you will examine your hypothesis/research question (ie a road map of the paper), and a suggested bibliography with at least 6 key sources.

Presentation: During the last two weeks of the course, you will be required to present the findings of your research paper during a joint class Zoom meeting. Presentations should be 20 minutes long followed by 10 minutes of questions. The time and date of these presentations will be determined in consultation with participants.

Research Paper: Participants will be required to write a 20 to 25 page (5000 to 6000 word) research paper on a key question relating to the relationship between indigeneity and sociology (or the social sciences). Topics should be chosen in consultation with the professor. The completed paper is due on April 8, 2026. Research papers should use the manuscript format suggested by the American Sociological Association (or MLA or APA if you are not a sociology student).

Please note that plagiarism is unacceptable and subject to various sanctions. Please see the university regulations section on academic dishonesty in the Calendar. For advice to avoid plagiarism please see <http://www.northwestern.edu/uacc/plagiar.html>

Soc 5115 Course Structure and Readings

Session 1 Introduction - Indigeneity and Sociological Theory

Session 2 The Rise of Indigeneity and Its Place in Sociology

Bello-Bravo, Julia. 2019. "When Is Indigeneity: Closing a Legal and Sociocultural Gap in a Contested Domestic/International Term." *AlterNative: An International Journal of Indigenous Peoples* 15(2):111–20.

McGuire Patricia, D. 2012. "Indigenous Spaces in Sociology." in *Reading Sociology: Canadian Perspectives*, edited by L. Tepperman and A. Kalyta. Toronto: Oxford University Press.

Rata, Elizabeth. 2002. "The Transformation of Indigeneity." *Review (Fernand Braudel Center)*:173–95.

Walter, M and K Butler. 2013. "Teaching Race to Teach Indigeneity." *Journal of Sociology* 49(4):397–410. doi: 10.1177/1440783313504051.

Session 3 Colonialism, Indigenous people and Classical Sociological Theory

*Bourne, H. R. Fox. 1900. *The Claims of Uncivilised Races a Paper Submitted to the International Congress on Colonial Sociology, Held in Paris in August, 1900.* London: Aborigines Protection Society. (*Warning – this article contains language that is today considered offensive. Please read it critically. It is meant to be an example of social thought of the pre-World War 1 period.)

Boatcă, Manuela. 2013. "“From the Standpoint of Germanism”: A Postcolonial Critique of Weber’s Theory of Race and Ethnicity." Pp. 55–80 in *Postcolonial Sociology*: Emerald Group Publishing Limited.

Seidman, Steven. 2013. "The Colonial Unconscious of Classical Sociology." in *Postcolonial Sociology*, edited by J. Go. Bingley, UK: Emerald Group Publishing Limited.

Steinmetz, George. 2024. "Durkheim’s Critique of Colonialism and Empire." *Modern Intellectual History* 21(4):874–96.

Session 4 Modern Sociological Theory and Indigeneity: Chicago School and Modernization Theory

Satzewich, Victor. 1991. "Aboriginal Peoples in Canada: A Critique of the Chicago School and Internal Colonial Models." *Innovation (Abingdon, England)* 4(2):283–302. doi: 10.1080/13511610.1991.9968263.

Tipps, Dean C. 1973. "Modernization Theory and the Comparative Study of National Societies: A Critical Perspective." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 15(2):199-226.

Mackay, Ried E. 2022. "An Indigenous Critique: Expanding Sociology and Recognizing Unique Indigenous Knowledge." *Frontiers in sociology* 7:1047812.

Carroll, Clint, Andrew Curley, Doreen E Martinez, Lindsey Schneider and Johann Strube. 2024. "Indigenous Perspectives on Dismantling the Legacies of Settler Colonialism in Rural Sociology☆." *Rural Sociology* 89:585–601

Session 5 Sociology and Postcolonialism

Frank, Andre Gunder. 1975. "Development and Underdevelopment in the New World: Smith and Marx Vs. The Weberians." *Theory and Society* 2(1):431-66.

Patel, Sujata. 2021. "Sociology's Encounter with the Decolonial: The Problematique of Indigenous Vs That of Coloniality, Extraversion and Colonial Modernity." *Current Sociology* 69(3):372–88.

Tuck, Eve. 2009. "Suspending Damage: A Letter to Communities." *Harvard Educational Review* 79(3):409–28

Session 6 Sociological Theory and Indigenous People in Canada: Early years

Clairmont, DH and FC Wien. 1976. "Race Relations in Canada." *Sociological Focus* 9(2):185–97.

Watkins, M. 1977. "From Underdevelopment to Development." Pp. 84-99 in *Dene Nation - the Colony Within*, edited by M. Watkins. Toronto: University of Toronto Press

Cardinal, Harold. 1975. "Canada's Indians: Contemporary Conflicts." *The Canadian Journal of Sociology* 1(1):128–30.

Hobart, C. W. 1968. "Report on Canadian Arctic Eskimos: Some Consequences of Residential Schooling." *Journal of American Indian Education* 7(2):7–17.

Session 7 Contemporary Discussions

Denis, Jeffrey S. 2015. "Contact Theory in a Small-Town Settler-Colonial Context: The Reproduction of Laissez-Faire Racism in Indigenous-White Canadian Relations." *American Sociological Review* 80(1):218-42.

Rodgers, K., & Scobie, W. (2024). "Unsettling Sociology Curriculum: Indigenous Content in Introductory Sociology Textbooks." *Teaching Sociology*, 52(4), 352-366. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0092055x241248185>

Watts, Vanessa, Gregory Hooks and Neil McLaughlin. 2020. "A Troubling Presence: Indigeneity in English-Language Canadian Sociology." *Canadian Review of Sociology/Revue canadienne de sociologie* 57(1):7-33.

Butler-McIlwraith, Kathleen. 2006. "(Re) Presenting Indigeneity: The Possibilities of Australian Sociology." *Journal of Sociology* 42(4):369–81.

Session 8 Rise of Settler Colonialism as a dominant theory

Wolfe, Patrick. 2006. "Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native." *Journal of genocide research* 8(4):387–409. doi: 10.1080/14623520601056240.

Steinman, E. W. 2022. "Settler colonialism and sociological knowledge: insights and directions forward." *Theory and Society* 51(1): 145-176.

Veracini, Lorenzo. 2013. "'Settler Colonialism': Career of a Concept." *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 41(2):313-33.

Session 9 Critiques of Settler Colonialism

Carey, Jane and Ben Silverstein. 2020. "Thinking with and Beyond Settler Colonial Studies: New Histories after the Postcolonial." *Postcolonial studies* 23(1):1-20. doi: 10.1080/13688790.2020.1719569.

Fung, A. 2021. "Is Settler Colonialism Just Another Study of Whiteness?". *Canadian Ethnic Studies-Etudes Ethniques Au Canada* 53(2):115-31.

Petry, Theresa. 2012. "Can Theory Disempower? Making Space for Agency in Theories of Indigenous Issues." in *Theorising Indigenous Sociology: Australian Perspectives*. , edited by D. Howard-Wagner, D. Habibis and T. Petray. Sydney, Australia: University of Sydney e-Press.

Session 10 More Indigenous Voices

Coulthard, Glen S. 2007. "Subjects of Empire: Indigenous Peoples and the 'Politics of Recognition' in Canada." *Contemporary political theory* 6(4):437-60. doi: 10.1057/palgrave.cpt.9300307.

Little Bear, Leroy. 2000. "Chapter 5: Jagged Worldviews Colliding." In Marie Battiste (Ed.) *Reclaiming Indigenous Voice and Vision*, pp. 77-85. Vancouver: UBC Press.

Simpson, Audra. 2007. "On Ethnographic Refusal: Indigeneity, 'Voice' and Colonial Citizenship." *Junctures: The Journal for Thematic Dialogue* (9).

Jacob, Michelle M. 2017. "Indigenous Studies Speaks to American Sociology: The Need for Individual and Social Transformations of Indigenous Education in the USA." *Social Sciences* 7(1):1.

Week 11 and !2 Presentations

Students with Special Needs

Students with special needs may request accommodations in accordance with the Senate Policy on Students with Disabilities. Such students should at the earliest opportunity advise the Student Accessibility Services (formerly the Learning Assistance Centre) and the instructor of such needs so that appropriate arrangements can be made to accommodate their needs. Those who encounter extenuating circumstances which may interfere with the successful completion of the course should, as soon as possible, discuss these circumstances with the instructor and the Student Accessibility Services.

Lakehead Policy on Academic Dishonesty

As academic integrity is crucial to the pursuit of university education, students are expected to uphold the academic honour code at all times and are advised to familiarise themselves with the university's policy on academic dishonesty, especially in relation, but not limited, to plagiarism, cheating, impersonation etc. In order to make sure that a degree awarded by Lakehead University is a reflection of the honest efforts and individual academic achievement of each student, Lakehead University treats cases of academic dishonesty very seriously and severely penalises those caught in violation of the university's policy on academic honesty.

LAKEHEAD RESOURCES

If you find yourself having difficulty with the course material or any other difficulties in your student life, don't hesitate to ask for help! If it is about an issue beyond this class, please contact your academic advisors, or get help from any number of other support services on campus, including:

The Student Success Centre has many programs and support services in place to help you achieve your academic and personal goals while studying at Lakehead University. They provide academic support through tutoring services, career exploration, co-operative opportunities and leadership development. More information is available here <https://www.lakeheadu.ca/current-students/student-success-centre>.

The Lakehead Library provides access to resources, study rooms, and research support both online via chat and in person with more details available here <https://library.lakeheadu.ca/>.

Public Computer Labs are available on campus where you may write and/or print out your work. For more details go to <https://www.lakeheadu.ca/faculty-and-staff/departments/services/helpdesk/computer-labs>.

Student Life and Services offers health and wellness resources both on and off campus, as well as opportunities for involvement in health and wellness activities. More information is available here <https://www.lakeheadu.ca/current-students/student-services/or>.

Office of Human Rights and Equity. You have the right to an education that is free from any form of discrimination. A wide variety of resources are available here <https://www.lakeheadu.ca/faculty-and-staff/departments/services/human-rights-and-equity/resources>.

Use of AI. Generative artificial intelligence (Generative AI or GenAI) is a category of AI systems capable of generating text, images, or other media in response to prompts. These systems include ChatGPT and its variant Bing (built by OpenAI) and Bard (built by Google) among several others. Other generative AI models include artificial intelligence art systems such as Stable Diffusion, Midjourney, and DALL-E.

GenAI tools can provide valuable assistance and support in academic work. However, it is essential to use them responsibly and ethically. The following information and guidelines apply to the use of AI-based tools in this course:

- a. **Student Responsibility** – It is the responsibility of the student to understand the limitations of AI-based tools. While these tools can provide suggestions and insights, final decisions and critical thinking should come from the student's own understanding and effort. Before submitting, review your work with this in mind. If you don't understand what type of GenAI usage is appropriate, ask the course instructor for clarification.
- b. **Formative Usage** – In this class, you may use GenAI for formative, but not summative, work. That means it can be used as a “possibility engine” (brainstorm tool), a “study buddy,” a “collaboration coach,” a “guide on the side,” a “personal tutor,” a “co-designer,” etc. to help you learn course content, but it cannot be used as the primary vehicle for any work that is submitted for marks or evaluation. (See UNESCO's [“ChatGPT and Artificial Intelligence in Higher Education Quick Start Guide”](#), page 9, for explanations and examples of these and other roles GenAI can productively serve in a formative capacity.)
- c. **Error & Bias** – AI content is created by computer algorithms that have been trained using large amounts of data. The AI learns from patterns and examples in the data to generate new content that resembles what it has been trained on. If the training data used to train the AI model is biased or limited in scope, the AI may reproduce content that is inaccurate, incomplete, offensive, and/or biased. Students should weigh this as they consider material produced by AI.
- d. **Trustworthiness** – Generative AI can be vulnerable to manipulation and misuse. It can be used to generate fake news, misinformation, or deepfake content, which can have harmful consequences. Students should check AI generated content against reputable sources.
- e. **Plagiarism** – Since [writing and critical thinking ability] are learning outcomes of this course, all work submitted for evaluation must be the student's original work. Using the work of others (including content curated/generated by AI) without proper citation is considered plagiarism. See “[Citing Artificial Intelligence](#)” for assistance with correct documentation.
- f. **Citation of Sources** – If you use material generated by an AI program for an assignment in this course, it must be cited like any other source (with due consideration for the quality of the source, which may be judged as poor). Failure to do so will be considered a violation of academic integrity. [See Student Code of Conduct – Academic Integrity](#).