

Indigenous Feminist and Queer Theories

POL377 HIS

Claude T. Bissell Building Room 205



Walking a path; never alone by Nadzin Degagné (Algonquin)

Dr. Uahikea Maile | uahikea.maile@utoronto.ca | Drop-In Hours (SSH 3067): Mon. 10am–12pm

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course explores Indigenous feminist and queer political thought. In particular, the course surveys political theories developed by scholars in the field of Indigenous, gender, and feminist studies to track two key developments. First, we examine how Indigenous feminist theorists expanded the field of Indigenous studies and, simultaneously, intervened in feminist politics and thought. Second, we investigate how queer Indigenous theorists build upon and extend Indigenous feminisms, and also contribute to queer politics and theory. In charting these critical developments in theory, as well as history and politics, the course investigates innovative Indigenous feminist and queer ideas about affect, decolonization, erotics, utopia, and much more.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

- Understand critical developments in Indigenous feminist and queer political thought
- Engage key debates in feminist and queer thought from the lens of Indigenous gender, sexuality, and feminist studies
- Explain particular Indigenous feminist and queer theories
- Write in the concentration of Indigenous politics

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

For this course, I expect you to:

- Closely read assigned material
- Attend and actively engage lectures
- Submit assignments in a timely manner
- Engage your peers and professor respectfully
- Contribute positively to a course climate free from hate, discrimination, and intolerance

PROFESSOR RESPONSIBILITIES

For this course, you should expect me to:

- Provide organized and enriching lectures
- Convey ideas from required material in a clear, thorough, and engaging manner
- Facilitate open and inclusive discussion
- Respect your individuality as people and learners
- Encourage you to become excellent readers, writers, and critical thinker

COURSE POLICIES

1. **Health and Safety:** This course follows U of T policy, rules, and protocols for health and safety. I strongly encourage everyone to remain up-to-date on vaccinations and upload your vaccination documents to [UCheck](#). Maintaining updated information on the vaccination status of our community will help inform future health and safety planning. It will also minimize disruption should conditions require vaccine requirements to be reimposed. If you are feeling unwell or experiencing any COVID-19 symptoms, you should stay home and self-isolate. [The provincial self-assessment tool](#) can help provide guidance and information for those that may have been exposed and/or have symptoms. While the current pause in our mandatory mask requirement continues, the use of a [medical mask](#) in high-density indoor spaces when physical distancing is not possible is strongly encouraged during the period when cases are rising in Ontario. U of T is a mask-friendly environment, and we ask everyone to respect each other's decisions, comfort levels, and health needs. The COVID-19 pandemic is a rapidly changing public health crisis, which national and provincial governments as well as the university are responding to in real time. This course is designed to adapt to such responses and, most importantly, keep you and our communities healthy and safe.
2. **Accommodations:** If you require accommodations throughout the course, I will do my best to accommodate your particular needs. Register with Accessibility Services on the phone (416-978-8060), via email (accessibility.services@utoronto.ca), or at their office (455 Spadina Avenue, 4th Floor, Suite 400, Toronto, ON, M5S 2G8). Contact me, or have a representative from Accessibility Services contact me, as soon as possible so you can be accommodated in a timely manner. Likewise, contact me if you require specific accommodations related to access to online course content.
3. **Absences:** Students are expected to complete the Absence Declaration form, available on [ACORN](#), anytime they are absent from class. No additional information or

documentation is required. In relation to the policy on health and safety, if you are not feeling well, you are highly encouraged to stay home. In that case, contact me for accommodations.

4. **Academic Integrity:** This course follows U of T policy, rules, and protocols on academic integrity. According to the International Center for Academic Integrity’s definition endorsed by the university, we should communicate and act in our class community and coursework with honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility, and courage. You are required to understand and adhere to the Faculty of Arts and Science’s Code of Behavior on Academic Matters. More information on academic integrity and what constitutes misconduct is available online: governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/secretariat/policies/code-behaviour-academic-matters-july-1-2019.
5. **Required Material:** All required materials are available in Querqus in the Library Reading List.
6. **Submitting Assignments:** Assignments are due on Sundays at 11:59pm EST. Assignments must be submitted electronically through Querqus (q.utoronto.ca). Normally, students will be required to submit their papers to the university’s plagiarism detection tool for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the tool’s reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the university’s use of this tool are described on the Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation web site (<http://uoft.me/pdt-faq>).
7. **Late Work:** Late assignment submissions are not accepted.
8. **Remarking:** You may submit a formal request for remarking after receiving work back, but no later than 2-weeks after it was returned. The request, submitted through Querqus, should include a rationale for remarking that will be evaluated to determine whether or not remarking is granted. I will remark the submission and return it no later than 2-weeks from the date remarking was granted. There is an appeal process that you can read more about online: teaching.artsci.utoronto.ca/teachinginas/academichandbook-jitreminders/#remarkingpolicy.
9. **Communication:** Use Querqus messenger to contact me. Do not email me concerning the course. I will try my best to respond via Querqus within 24–48 hours after receiving a message during the week. If you are experiencing an emergency and need to be in touch with me, send me an email.

READING SUMMARIES – 15 total points

You are required to write and submit five (5) reading summaries. Each summary is worth 3-points. The objective of this assignment is to concisely summarize a selected piece of required material. There are three (3) primary components to the assignment: thesis, summary, and application. Each component is worth 1-point and is evaluated for *accuracy* and *completeness*. A detailed guide for the reading summary and sample are provided in Querqus. For each submission, you must select a *single required reading* to summarize—choosing just *one article or book chapter*—from *each block of material*:

Block #1:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Who Is Your Mother?” • “From the ‘F’ Word to Indigenous/Feminisms”
------------------	--

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Indigenous Feminisms”
Block #2:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Felt Theory” • “Captivating Eunice” • “Notes Toward a Native Feminism’s Spatial Practice” • “Securing Navajo National Boundaries” • “Decolonizing Rape Law”
Block #3:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Women’s Mana and Hawaiian Sovereignty” • “Navigating Our Own ‘Sea of Islands’” • Introduction to <i>Nā Wāhine Koa</i> • “Queer Theory and Native Studies” • “Love Unbecoming” • “Indigenous Queer Normativity” • “Can the Other of Native Studies Speak?” • “What’s Normative Got to Do With It?”
Block #4:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Aloha in Drag” • “Indians on Top” • “The Erotics of Sovereignty” • “Indigenous Fantasies and Sovereign Erotics”
Block #5:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Notes Toward a Theory of Anomaly” • “Sodomy, Sovereignty, and Other Utopian Longings” • “Everyday Decolonization” • “Unsettling Queer Politics”

PAPER – 35 total points

The paper is a literature review of Indigenous feminist thought. Select two (2) to three (3) articles or book chapters to review from the required material on Indigenous feminist thought (Weeks 2–5). The purpose of the paper is to review the *ideas* of Indigenous feminist thinkers to compare, contrast, and synthesize *theoretical contributions*. Develop and posit a *thesis* about the selected thinkers’ ideas and theories and how they contribute to Indigenous feminist thought, as well as potential *gaps* and/or *limits* in the discussed ideas and theories. The paper is assessed on the thesis statement (5-points), review of literature (15-points), discussion of contributions, gaps, and/or limits (10-points), and organization, spelling, and grammar (5-points). Papers should be 7–8 pages (~2,500 words) with a 1-point deduction for each page under/over this requirement. Submissions should be written in Chicago 17th edition format with 1-inch margins, 12-point font, double-spaced, and endnotes. Samples are provided in Querqus.

FINAL EXAM – 50 total points

The final exam is an essay. On exam day, you will select three (3) questions to answer out of five (5) questions. The five (5) questions will be assigned from a larger list of ten (10) possible questions, which will be released one (1) month before exam day. You are required to write three (3) separate essays responding to the three (3) questions selected to answer. Combine separate essays into a single document to upload as your submission. The exam is open, meaning you may use required materials, lecture notes, reading summaries, and your literature review to write essays. You will be given four (4) hours to compose and submit the exam. It will be evaluated based on topicality (10-points), accuracy (15-points), substantiation (15-points), and

development (10-points). Individual essays should be 2–3 pages (~1,000 words). This means that the cumulative exam should be 6–9 pages (~3,000 words). Submissions should be written in Chicago 17th edition format with 1-inch margins, 12-point font, double-spaced, and endnotes.

MARKING SCHEME

<i>Term Work</i>	<i>Due Date</i>	<i>Weight in Percentage</i>
Reading Summaries	Jan. 22, Feb. 5, Mar. 5, Mar. 19, Apr. 2	15%
Paper	Feb. 19	35%
Final Exam	To be announced	50%

GRADING SCALE

Percentage	Grade	GPA Value	Grade Definition
90-100	A+	4.0	Excellent
85-89	A	4.0	
80-84	A-	3.7	
77-79	B+	3.3	Good
73-76	B	3.0	
70-72	B-	2.7	
67-69	C+	2.3	Adequate
63-66	C	2.0	
60-62	C-	1.7	
57-59	D+	1.3	Marginal
53-56	D	1.0	
50-52	D-	0.7	
0-49	F	0.0	Inadequate

COURSE SCHEDULE

	<i>Topics and Readings</i>	<i>Assignment Due</i>
<u>Week 1:</u> January 12	Introduction Complete opening tasks in Querqus	
<u>Week 2:</u> January 19	What is Indigenous Feminist Thought? “Who Is Your Mother?” Paula Gunn Allen “From the ‘F’ Word to Indigenous/Feminisms” by Luana Ross “Indigenous Feminisms” by Joanne Barker	Reading Summary 1
<u>Week 3:</u> January 26	Affect, History & Geography “Felt Theory” by Dian Million “Captivating Eunice” by Audra Simpson “Notes Toward a Native Feminism’s Spatial Practice” by Mishuana Goeman	
<u>Week 4:</u> February 2	Tradition & Law “Securing Navajo National Boundaries” by Jennifer Nez Denetdale “Decolonizing Rape Law” by Sarah Deer	Reading Summary 2

<p><u>Week 5:</u> February 9</p>	<p>Sovereignty, Decolonization & Demilitarization</p> <p>“Women’s Mana and Hawaiian Sovereignty” by Haunani-Kay Trask “Navigating Our Own ‘Sea of Islands’” by Lisa Kahaleole Hall Introduction to <i>Nā Wāhine Koa</i> by Noelani Goodyear-Ka‘ōpua</p>	
<p><u>Week 6:</u> February 16</p>	<p>What is Queer Indigenous Thought? Part 1</p> <p>“Queer Theory and Native Studies” by Andrea Smith “Love Unbecoming” by Jodi A. Byrd</p>	<p>Paper</p>
<p><u>Week 7:</u> February 23</p>	<p>Reading Week</p>	
<p><u>Week 8:</u> March 2</p>	<p>What is Queer Indigenous Thought? Part 2</p> <p>“Indigenous Queer Normativity” by Leanne Betasamosake Simpson “Can the Other of Native Studies Speak?” Billy-Ray Belcourt “What’s Normative Got to Do with It?” Jodi A. Byrd</p>	<p>Reading Summary 3</p>
<p><u>Week 9:</u> March 9</p>	<p>Drag</p> <p>“Aloha in Drag” by Stephanie Nohelani Teves “‘Indians on Top’” by June Scudeler</p>	
<p><u>Week 10:</u> March 16</p>	<p>Erotics</p> <p>“The Erotics of Sovereignty” by Mark Rifkin “Indigenous Fantasies and Sovereign Erotics” by Lisa Tattonetti</p>	<p>Reading Summary 4</p>
<p><u>Week 11:</u> March 23</p>	<p>Anomaly & Utopia</p> <p>“Notes Toward a Theory of Anomaly” by Daniel Heath Justice “Sodomy, Sovereignty, and Other Utopian Longings” by Juana María Rodríguez</p>	
<p><u>Week 12:</u> March 30</p>	<p>Unsettling Decolonization</p> <p>“Everyday Decolonization” by Sarah Hunt & Cindy Holmes “Unsettling Queer Politics” by Scott Lauria Morgensen</p>	<p>Reading Summary 5</p>

Week 13: April 6	No lecture — study for Final Exam!	
---------------------	---	--

REQUIRED MATERIALS

- Allen, Paula Gunn. *The Sacred Hoop: Recovering the Feminine in American Indian Traditions*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1986.
- Barker, Joanne. "Indigenous Feminisms." In *The Oxford Handbook of Indigenous People's Politics*, edited by José Antonio Lucero, Dale Turner, and Donna Lee VanCott, 1-13. New York: Oxford University Press, 2015.
- Belcourt, Billy-Ray. "Can the Other of Native Studies Speak?" *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society*. February 1, 2016. <http://decolonization.wordpress.com/2016/02/01/can-the-other-of-native-studies-speak>.
- Byrd, Jodi A. "What's Normative Got to Do with It?" *Social Text* 145, no. 4 (2020): 105-123.
- _____. "Loving Unbecoming: The Queer Politics of the Transitive Native." In *Critically Sovereign: Indigenous Gender, Sexuality, and Feminist Studies*, edited by Joanne Barker, 207-227. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Deer, Sarah. "Decolonizing Rape Law: A Native Feminist Synthesis of Safety and Sovereignty." *Wicazo Sa Review* 24, no. 2 (2009): 149-167.
- Denetdale, Jennifer Nez. "Securing Navajo National Boundaries: War, Patriotism, Tradition, and the Diné Marriage Act of 2005." *Wicazo Sa Review* 24, no. 2 (2009): 131-148.
- Goeman, Mishuana. "Notes toward a Native Feminism's Spatial Practice." *Wicazo Sa Review* 24, no. 2 (2009): 169-187.
- Goodyear-Ka'ōpua, Noelani. Introduction to *Nā Wāhine Koa: Hawaiian Women for Sovereignty and Demilitarization*, Edited by Noelani Goodyear-Ka'ōpua. Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai'i Press, 2018.
- Hall, Lisa Kahaleole. "Navigating Our Own 'Sea of Islands': Remapping a Theoretical Space for Hawaiian Women and Indigenous Feminism." *Wicazo Sa Review* 24, no. 2 (2009): 15-38.
- Hunt, Sarah and Cindy Holmes. "Everyday Decolonization: Living a Decolonizing Queer Politics." *Journal of Lesbian Studies* 19, no. 1 (2015): 154-172.
- Justice, Daniel Heath. "Notes Toward a Theory of Anomaly." *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay* 16, no. 1-2 (2010): 207-242.
- Million, Dian. "Felt Theory: An Indigenous Feminist Approach to Affect and History." *Wicazo Sa Review* 24, no. 2 (2009): 53-76.
- Morgensen, Scott Lauria. "Unsettling Queer Politics: What Can Non-Natives Learn from Two-Spirit Organizing." In *Queer Indigenous Studies: Critical Interventions in Theory, Politics, and Literature*, Edited by Qwo-Li Driskill, Chris Finley, Brian Joseph Gilley, and Scott Lauria Morgensen. 132-152. Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press, 2011.
- Rifkin, Mark. "The Erotics of Sovereignty." In *Queer Indigenous Studies: Critical Interventions in Theory, Politics, and Literature*, Edited by Qwo-Li Driskill, Chris Finley, Brian Joseph Gilley, and Scott Lauria Morgensen. 172-189. Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press, 2011.
- Rodríguez, Juana María. *Sexual Futures, Queer Gestures, and Other Latina Longings*. New York: New York University Press, 2014.
- Ross, Luana. "From the 'F' Word to Indigenous/Feminisms." *Wicazo Sa Review* 24, no. 2 (2009): 39-52.
- Simpson, Leanne Betasamosake. *As We Have Always Done: Indigenous Freedom Through Radical Resistance*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2017.
- Scudeler, June. "'Indians on Top': Kent Monkman's Sovereign Erotics." *American Indian Research and Culture Journal* 39, no. 4 (2015): 19-32.
- Smith, Andrea. "Queer Theory and Native Studies." *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay* 16, no. 1-2 (2010): 42-68.
- Tatonetti, Lisa. "Indigenous Fantasies and Sovereign Erotics: Outland Cherokees Write Two-Spirit Nations." In *Queer Indigenous Studies: Critical Interventions in Theory, Politics, and Literature*, Edited by Qwo-Li Driskill, Chris Finley, Brian Joseph Gilley, and Scott Lauria Morgensen. 155-171. Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press, 2011.
- Teves, Stephanie Nohelani. *Defiant Indigeneity: The Politics of Hawaiian Performance*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2018.
- Trask, Haunani-Kay. *From a Native Daughter: Colonialism and Sovereignty in Hawai'i*. Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai'i Press, 1999.