Mi’kmaq Studies: Advanced Critical Issues in Indigenous Anthropology
Anthropology 332
Mondays 6:30-9:00
BB 337

This course meets in Mi’kma’ki the territory of the Mi’kmaw Nation

Professor: L. Jane McMillan, PhD
Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays 4:45-6:00 or by appointment
To book an appointment email ljmcmill@stfx.ca
Location: JBB 306
902.867.5021

Course Description
In the first section we explore Mi’kmaw oral histories, cosmology and the complexity of sociocultural organization before colonization. In the second section we look at the impacts of colonization on the Mi’kmaw culture and governance. In the third section we look at contemporary Mi’kmaw issues such as court decisions, treaty education and implementation, Mi’kmaw legal principles and the criminal justice system, economic development, resource use, cultural production and reconciliation. Central themes of the course include for example: pre and early contact sociocultural organization, the consequences of colonization, Mi’kmaw resistance to cultural genocide, Indigenous legal traditions and their current applications, natural resource management, governance, rights, treaties, cosmology, gender relations, social change, and identity politics, through an in-depth ethnographic exploration of Mi’kmaw rights Atlantic Canada.

Course Format
This course is an advanced seminar consisting of assigned readings, research projects, in class writing assignments, lectures, films, guest speakers, group discussions and presentations.

Goals and Objectives
1. To critically assess the impact of colonization on Mi’kmaw peoples in Canada;
2. To examine and compare strategies to address social change and governance in Mi’kmaw communities;
3. To learn about Indigenous legal traditions and their application today;
4. To engage in discussions and develop action plans to build sustainable economies that reinvigorate Mi’kmaq cultures and knowledge;
5. To understand and practice ethical protocols and collaborative methodologies used in conducting anthropological research with Mi’kmaw communities.
6. To practice decolonization in every day actions.
7. To critically challenge and implement the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

Required Texts


Sable, Trudy and Bernie Francis (2012) The Language of this Land Mi’kma’ki Sydney: Cape Breton University Press.
Other materials will be posted to the course moodle. The Battiste and Sable texts are available at the library reserve desk.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADE ACCUMULATION OPPORTUNITIES
10% Attendance and participation (everyday)
20% Indian horse and Shubenacadie Residential School essay assignment (Oct 1)
20% Treaty Day event and assignment (Oct 15)
10% Treaty Narratives in class presentations (Oct 22)
30% Essay (Nov 19)
10% Research Conference (Nov 26)

COURSE OUTLINE
This syllabus is subject to change. Below are the required readings per week, please complete the assigned readings prior to class. Additional readings will be posted on Moodle.

ATTENDANCE & PARTICIPATION
Attendance is required. Absences will be reported to the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs. 10% of your grade is based on informed participation and in-class activities. Readings must be completed before class and students are expected to raise questions, exchange ideas and fully participate in discussions and activities. Disagreeing with the professor, or something from the readings, or with others’ comments during discussion is expected – understanding different interpretations are part of what anthropology is about. Different viewpoints help us think through our own opinions and are important to developing our critical thinking skills. Share your ideas, but be respectful of each other. Together we must make this class a safe space for sharing divergent points of view. Periodically you will be asked to write short essays, one-minute papers, workshop questions, practice research methods in small groups, and present findings, which will be assessed. If you are absent on an in-class assignment day you will receive a grade of 0 for that activity. There will be no make up opportunities.

Everyone learns more effectively in a respectful, safe, and equitable learning environment free from discrimination or harassment. I invite you to work with me to create a classroom space—both real and virtual—that fosters, and promotes values of human dignity, equity, non-discrimination and respect for diversity. These values and practices are in accord with the StFX Discrimination and Harassment Policy, which can be found at https://sites.stfx.ca/equity/Policies.html. Please feel free to discuss with me any questions or concerns you have about equity in our classroom or in the StFX
community. If I cannot answer your questions or help you address your concerns, I encourage you to talk with the Human Rights and Equity Advisor, Megan Fogarty (mfogarty@stfx.ca).

September 10: Mi’kma’ki and the Mi’kmaw Nation
The Mi’kmawey Mawiomi and ways of life prior to settlers.

September 17: Shubenacadie Residential School
https://muse.jhu.edu/article/478711/pdf on line through the library.
Search the Truth and Reconciliation Commission website trc.ca and academic authors on the IRS impacts in Atlantic Canada.

September 24: Film Night Indian Horse. Attend the screening of Indian Horse. 7:00, location TBA. Write an essay on the Shubenacadie Indian Residential School and its impacts on the Mi’kmaw Nation. Your essay must include:

- An introduction and a thesis statement;
- An overview of the school and its history;
- An analysis of the impacts of the Shubenacadie Indian Residential School on the Mi’kmaw Nation;
- Conclude with an assessment of the value of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission for residential school survivors and their descendants and the Mi’kmaw Nation.
- Follow the anthropology department essay-writing guide.
- A minimum of three academic sources, properly cited in text.
- Typed, double spaced, 12-point font, page numbered, titled, minimum 5 pages.
- Due October 1. 20%

October 1: Treaty Day
Essay topics must be approved.
Readings: Battiste chapters 1-5; R. v Marshall
We are hosting a Treaty Day panel to celebrate Treaty Day at StFX. It starts at 7:00 in Immaculate. Bring your friends and family. Everyone will be assigned a task. Each of you will have a role to play (welcoming people to territory, researching and writing biographies to introduce guest speakers, asking prepared questions of the panel, reciting a poem or a story you have written about Treaty Day). During the panel take good notes. What are the issues the
speakers raise? What are the questions the audience asks? Who is attending the panel? What is the audience response? Think about the anthropological practice of participant observation.

Write a reflection essay on the Treaty Day panel. Your essay must include:
- An introduction and thesis statement on what are Mi’kmaw Treaties;
- An overview section of Mi’kmaw treaties and their significance;
- An assessment of the challenges of recognizing Mi’kmaw treaties;
- A reflection on the phrase “We are all Treaty people”;
- Follow the anthropology department essay-writing guide.
- A minimum of four academic sources, properly cited in text.
- Typed, double spaced, 12-point font, page numbered, titled, maximum 10 pages.
- Due in class October 15. 20%

**October 15: Treaty Narratives and Governance Today**
Readings: Battiste chapter 6-11
Treaty Essays DUE (20%).

**October 22: Two-Eyed Seeing - Seeking and Remobilizing Netukulimk**
Readings: Battiste 12-17; McMillan and Prosper

**In-class presentations (10%).**
Each student will present either on a selected reading from the Battiste text or a summary of their treaty essays.

**October 29: Mi’kmaw Encounters with the Canadian Justice System**

**November 5: Mi’kmaw Landscapes**
Readings: Sable – introduction and chapters 1-2

**November 19: Mi’kmaw Nationhood**
Readings: Sable chapter 3-5 plus conclusion

**Essays due (30%)**
This assignment is intended to develop the following skills:
1) Conducting original research on a topic relevant to Mi’kmaw studies;
2) Applying theoretical concepts to evidence to see what it can explain;
3) Using ethnographic and other anthropological evidence to support your argument;
4) Assessing anthropological methods;
5) Using the essay format to present an argument and support it with evidence.
6) Write an essay abstract.

Topics must be approved by the professor by October 1. Titled, maximum 20 pages, 12-point font, double-spaced, page numbers, in text citations (Author (last name) – Date) which then match up to an entry in a reference list, where full bibliographic information is accurately provided in alphabetical order. Essays are due at the beginning of class; late assignments will not be accepted.

Example topics:
1. A Mi’kmaw community case study
2. Union of Nova Scotia Indians
3. Confederacy of Mainland Mi’kmaq
4. Mi’kmaq Native Friendship Centre
5. Native Council of Nova Scotia
6. Nova Scotia Native Women’s Association
7. Mi’kmaw Legal Support Network
8. Unama’ki Institute of Natural Resources
9. Life history of a Mi’kmaw person
10. The Mi’kmaw Rights Initiative (KMK)
11. The Mi’kmaw Grand Council
12. Nationhood
13. Wabanaki Two-Spirited Alliance
14. Mi’kmaw Family and Children Services
15. Mi’kmaw Health Services
16. Mi’kmaw Ceremonies
17. Mi’kmaw and the United Nations
18. Moose Management Initiative
19. Mi’kmaw and the courts
20. Policing in Mi’kma’ki
21. Political economy and economic development in Mi’kma’ki
22. Mi’kmaw tourism
23. Atlantic Policy Congress of First Nations Chief Secretariat

November 26: Mawiomi - In class conference and feast (10%)
Students will present their research essays in a conference style presentation.

Follow the StFX Anthropology Department Academic Essay Guide.
Please follow the rules of academic honesty; do not plagiarize and cite work correctly. Familiarize yourself with StFX’s Academic Integrity Policies and Procedures and seek assistance from the library if you have questions. 
https://www2.mystfx.ca/registrars-office/sites/mystfx.ca.registrars-office/files/Academic%20Integrity-Mar_2015_0.pdf

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https://www2.mystfx.ca/registrars-office/sites/mystfx.ca.registrars-office/files/Academic%20Integrity-Mar_2015_0.pdf