

School of Liberal Arts



LANG 240
Language Activism
Winter 2026

3 Credits

Course Outline

INSTRUCTOR	Robyn Giffen	OFFICE HOURS	By appointment, on Zoom
OFFICE	n/a	CLASSROOM	Online
E-MAIL	rgiffen@yukonu.ca	CLASS TIME	Wednesdays 4:00-5:20pm
TELEPHONE	--	CRN	20124
Dates	January 6 – April 23, 2026		
Liberal Arts office: Ayamdigut Campus A2501, liberalarts@yukonu.ca, 867-668-8770			

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Throughout this course, students will explore endangered languages in Northern Canada including the Yukon, Northwest Territories, and Nunavut. They will learn why languages in these regions are endangered and what is being done about it. Students will learn what it means to be a language advocate through examining language policy, funding sources for endangered languages, and community engagement.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Prerequisite(s): LANG 140

EQUIVALENCY OR TRANSFERABILITY

This course is new/newly developed/recently re-developed, and its transferability is still being evaluated. Receiving institutions always determine course transferability. Further information and assistance with transfers may be available from the School of Liberal Arts.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

With conscientious effort, upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Identify and explain what an endangered language is and why languages in Northern Canada (Yukon, Northwest Territories, Nunavut) and other northern countries are endangered;
- Describe how the loss of language affects Indigenous/minority communities;
- Explain Indigenous perspectives on connections between language, culture, and self-determination;
- Identify and explain the contributions of a language advocate to endangered language communities;

- Illustrate several digital strategies for language revitalization, and;
- Describe what language policy is and how to work within the framework of these policies.

COURSE FORMAT

Delivery format

This course is delivered online with one meeting time (synchronous delivery) during which students are expected to attend by web-conferencing (Zoom) and engage with the instructor and other students.

Students are also expected to complete an assortment of asynchronous online activities (readings, lecture videos, discussion posts). Students should visit the course website (Moodle) throughout the week and work through materials and assignments.

The class will proceed on a timetable with set assignments and due dates. This is **not** a self-paced course.

Workload

Class time each week is 80 minutes. It is expected that this course will require approximately 3 hours/week to complete readings, watch lecture videos, and work on assignments. It is important to note that the time required for successful course completion will vary by individual.

EVALUATION

Zoom Attendance & Participation

Students are expected to attend and actively participate in weekly zoom classes including discussions and activities, as assigned by the instructor. The material covered in the class is cumulative in nature, and missing classes may put students at a disadvantage. These meetings will not be recorded.

Weekly Discussion Forum (12 in total) *due: every Sunday by 11:59pm*

Students are also expected to participate weekly in online discussions with their classmates. Students will respond to a set of discussion questions based on the weekly readings, lectures, videos, and/or current events. Students must complete their own discussion post as well as respond to at least one other classmate's post. No late discussion posts or responses will be accepted.

Media Responses (2 in total)

Students will select a news story from a news outlet (CBC, CNN, etc.) that relates to one of the topics covered in class and write a response to it. They will submit a 3-page paper.

Activism Project

In this 3-part assignment students have the opportunity to investigate a course topic on a deeper level. The project selected should address some aspect of language activism that is interesting/relevant to you. This assignment includes Part 1) Proposal, Part 2) Project, and Part 3) Presentation.

* Detailed assignment descriptions and grading rubrics can be found on the course website.

Evaluation	Weight
Zoom Attendance and Participation	5 %
Weekly Discussion Forum	15 %
Media Responses (2 x 15% each)	30 %
Activism Proposal	15 %
Activism Project	25 %
Activism Presentation	10 %
Total	100%

TEXTBOOKS & LEARNING MATERIALS

All readings and supplementary materials will be posted on the course website.

Students are required to have access to a computer, laptop, or tablet that can run and operate the online Moodle platform and Zoom web-conferencing. It is recommended that students have access to wired high-speed internet to efficiently use Moodle and to participate in Zoom class every week.

COURSE WITHDRAWAL INFORMATION

Students may officially withdraw from a course or program without academic penalty up until two-thirds of the course contact hours have been completed. Specific withdrawal dates vary, and students should become familiar with the withdrawal dates of their program. See withdrawal information at

www.yukonu.ca/admissions/money-matters

Refer to the YukonU website for important dates: www.yukonu.ca/admissions/important-dates

Refunds may be available. See the Refund policy and procedures at www.yukonu.ca/admissions/money-matters

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Students are expected to contribute toward a positive and supportive environment and are required to conduct themselves in a responsible manner. Academic misconduct includes all forms of academic dishonesty such as cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, fraud, deceit, using the work of others without their permission, aiding other students in committing academic offences, misrepresenting academic assignments prepared by others as one's own, or any other forms of academic dishonesty including falsification of any information on any Yukon University document.

Please refer to Academic Regulations & Procedures (updated bi-annually) for further details about academic standing, and student rights and responsibilities: www.yukonu.ca/policies/academic-regulations

ACCESSIBILITY AND ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION

Yukon University is committed to providing a positive, supportive, and barrier-free academic environment for all its students. Students experiencing barriers to full participation due to a visible or

hidden disability (including hearing, vision, mobility, learning disability, mental health, chronic or temporary medical condition), should contact Accessibility Services for resources or to arrange academic accommodations: access@yukonu.ca. [Text updated 16 November 2022]

TOPIC OUTLINE

Dates	Topic	Assignments
Week 1: Jan. 5 – 11, 2026	Introductions	Introductions forum post
Week 2: Jan. 12 – 18, 2026	Language Reclamation	Weekly discussion post
Week 3: Jan. 19 – 25, 2026	Language Rights	Weekly discussion post
Week 4: Jan. 26 – Feb. 1, 2026	Language Policy	Weekly discussion post
Week 5: Feb. 2 – 8, 2026	Canada's North	Weekly discussion post; Activism Proposal due February 8
Week 6: Feb 9 – 15, 2026	Arctic Languages	Weekly discussion post
Week 7: Feb. 16 – 22, 2026	Inspiring ILR around the world	Weekly discussion post; Media Response 1 due February 22
Week 8: Feb. 23 – Mar. 1, 2026	Special Cases in ILR	Weekly discussion post
Week 9: Mar. 2 – 5, 2026		
Week 10: Mar. 6 – 16, 2026		Reading Week & Arctic Winter Games
Week 11: Mar. 17 – 22, 2026	Impacts of C19	Weekly discussion post
Week 12: Mar. 23 – 29, 2026	Decolonizing ILR	Weekly discussion post
Week 13: Mar. 30 – Apr. 5, 2026	Research ethics & protocol	Weekly discussion post; Activism Project due April 5
Week 14: April 6 – 12, 2026	Funding ILR	Weekly discussion post; Project Presentation due April 8
Week 15: April 13 – 17, 2026	Wrapping up and looking forward	Weekly discussion post; Media Response 2 due April 17 Last zoom class April 15