



School of School of Applied Science and Management

POLI 230

Indigenous Political Thought

Term: Fall 2025

Number of Credits: 3

Course Outline

INSTRUCTOR: Jocelyne Wasacase-Merasty
E-MAIL: jwasacasemerasty@yukonu.ca
CLASS TIME: Wednesdays 1:00 PM – 2:20 PM
DATE: September 3, 2025, to December 3, 2025
CLASSROOM: Online Scheduled Session
OFFICE HOURS: By Appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course reviews past and contemporary Indigenous perspectives on governance and politics. Content will address ancestral to modern governance processes in the Yukon from an Indigenous viewpoint. Various Indigenous positions regarding the land claims process and modes of self-government will be explored. Leaders, concepts, and theories in the development of Indigenous political thought will be discussed. Critical thinking will be a focus of exercises and assignments.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

POLI 101 or POLI 201
AND one of FNGA 100, FNGA 101 or HIST 140

EQUIVALENCY OR TRANSFERABILITY

This course has been developed, and its transferability is still being evaluated. Receiving institutions always determine course transferability. The School of Business and Leadership may provide further information and assistance with transfers.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

- describe Indigenous ancestral (land-, language-, story- and culture-based) governance values, principles and practices.
- identify the impacts of historical and continued colonialism on Indigenous bodies, lands, languages, cultures and governance.
- compare state-informed governance approaches in Indigenous politics with those informed by Indigenous ancestral values, principles, and practices.
- review current modes of Indigenous governance, particularly as they relate to modern governance processes.
- give examples of practices and approaches to Indigenous governance.
- identify key concepts and approaches used in Indigenous political thought (e.g. resurgence, reconciliation, decolonization, etc.).

COURSE FORMAT

There is a regular, scheduled class meeting once a week (1.5 hours via Zoom) if students wish to attend. A recording will be available on Moodle. Although all students will complete the same module of work at the same time, they may log in and complete the work at any time during the week. Students will work individually to complete the assessments.

Students are encouraged to use the resources provided in class as tools to support their coursework. The instructor will aim to keep the course material interactive and varied.

Email and frequent Internet access are an essential part of this course. The instructor will communicate through email and Yukon College's Learning Management System (Moodle). Using online tools and resources is a required part of this course.

Weekly breakdown of instructional hours

The course consists of 1.5 hours of weekly lectures with additional hours of reading and assignments.

Delivery format

This course will be delivered entirely online. Students must attend virtual classes online via Zoom and complete synchronous and asynchronous online activities.

ASSESSMENTS:

Assignments

Seminar Preparation Sheets (35%): Students will produce seven (7) seminar preparation sheets throughout the term (worth 5% each). Each preparation sheet will focus on the weekly readings and require students to read the assigned readings and organize their thoughts and responses for the weekly seminar. Preparation sheets will require identifying arguments and key concepts in the readings, summarizing themes, developing discussion questions, and/or offering personal reflections, etc.

Class Attendance, Participation & Self Evaluation Form (20%): For 13 weeks, we will engage in a 90-minute seminar via Zoom. The instructor will facilitate the virtual seminar. Students are expected to engage in facilitated discussion about the assigned readings. Students will submit a preparation sheet (explained above) to prepare for the virtual seminar. In the first week of classes, the students and instructor will co-create the expectations for the virtual seminar. Participation will be graded by weekly attendance and completing a self-assessment form that will be shared in week 12.

Critical Reflections (20%). Students will complete an in-depth critical reflection of the course materials in essay format twice throughout the term. Each reflection piece is worth 10%. Students will be asked to compare/contrast or put into conversation **three or more of the class** readings, positions, arguments, and/or theories from the assigned readings or media. Students can complete this assignment by drawing upon material from their Seminar Preparation Sheets. The Reflections are not cumulative but **focus on readings within a 5-week period** noted in the syllabus.

Poster Project (25%): Each student will design a governance project or program that can be offered in the community. The student **will identify a governance problem or issue they see in a community they are connected to.** They will then apply the ideas presented in this course to design a program to address the problem. The final project does not include carrying out the program but will ask the student to explain all the program details (who, what, where, when) and why they think their program will be valuable to their community. The student will present their project on a poster and share it with their classmates and possibly the broader community at an end-of-term gathering. More instructions and project instructions will be circulated later in the semester.

EVALUATION:

Weekly Seminar Preparation Sheets (7 x 5%)	35 %
Critical Reflections (2 x 10%)	20 %
Poster Project	25 %
Class Attendance, Participation	15%
Self-Evaluation Form	5 %
Total	100%

COURSE WITHDRAWAL INFORMATION

Refer to the YukonU website for important dates.

TEXTBOOKS & LEARNING MATERIALS

Vowel, C. (2016). *Indigenous Writes: A Guide to First Nations, Métis & Inuit issues in Canada*. Winnipeg, MB: HighWater Press.

Course material and additional articles and links are located in the course module in Moodle. Computer and Internet access is required to access course material and assignments.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Students are expected to contribute toward a positive and supportive environment and are required to conduct themselves responsibly. 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 for further details about academic standing and student rights and responsibilities.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION

Reasonable accommodations are available for students requiring an academic accommodation to fully participate in this class. These accommodations are available for students with a documented disability, chronic condition or any other grounds specified in section 8.0 of the Yukon University Academic Regulations (available on the Yukon University website). It is the student's responsibility to seek these accommodations by contacting the Learning Assistance Centre (LAC): LearningAssistanceCentre@yukonu.ca.

TOPIC OUTLINE:

Week	Topic
1	Course Overview / Governance: Values, Principles & Practice
2	Culture & Identity: Embracing Indigenous Wisdom
3	Culture & Identity: First Nations, Métis, & Inuit Terminology & Identity
	Culture & Identity: Cultural Appropriation/Intellectual Property
4	Colonialism: Key Concepts and Impact on Indigenous Governance
5	Colonialism: Reserves & the Indian Act
6	Colonialism: Historic and Modern Treaties
7	Recognition & Reconciliation: Sovereignty & Self-Determination
8	Recognition & Reconciliation: Politics of Recognition
9	Recognition & Reconciliation: Resurgence, Reconciliation, & Rationality
10	Recognition & Reconciliation: Indigeneity
11	Making Space: Indigenous Feminism & Queer Theory
12	Poster Presentations
13	Poster Presentations
14	Go forward in a good way – Poster Submissions & Self Evaluation Forms are Due (via Dropbox)