

2013 Higher Education Teaching and Learning Conference
Orlando, FL
January 14, 2013
(B7: Connecting Classrooms-International Partnerships in Higher Education)

“An International Student Exchange on Indigenous Knowledge”

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Handout: Course Syllabi (selected sections) and Exchange Guidelines

CCS/ED 604: Documenting Indigenous Knowledge(s)

University of Alaska Fairbanks

Instructor: Beth Leonard, Ph.D.
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Research is one of the ways in which the underlying code of imperialism and colonialism is both regulated and realized” (Smith, 1999, p. 7).

Course Purposes

- Develop a working definition of Indigenous knowledge(s) and the role of Elders/Tradition Bearers in its practice and perpetuation;
- Explore issues associated with documenting Indigenous knowledge(s) and doing Indigenous-based research;
- Examine ways of appropriately documenting the knowledge systems, ways of knowing and world views practiced by Indigenous peoples;
- Explore issues associated with transforming oral knowledge into literate forms;
- Review various epistemological structures and their function in organizing knowledge in culturally meaningful ways; and
- Provide practical experience in documenting and reporting Indigenous knowledge(s) in a real-world context.

Course Description

The course will provide students with an introduction into the historical background of research and Indigenous peoples, the role of Indigenous researchers, a thorough grounding in the research methodologies and issues associated with documenting and conveying the depth and breadth of Indigenous knowledge systems and their epistemological structures. Included will be a survey of oral and literate data techniques, a review of modes of analysis and presentation, and practical experience in a real-life setting.

The development of an Indigenous research paradigm is of great importance to Indigenous people because it allows the development of Indigenous theory and methods of practice. For example, in the field of Indigenous psychology, Indigenous people will be the ones who decide what is “normal” or “abnormal,” or if that distinction even needs to exist” (Wilson, 2008, p. 19).

Required Texts

- Smith, L. T. (1999). *Decolonizing methodologies: Research and indigenous peoples*. London: Zed Books Ltd.
- Wilson, S. (2009). *Research as ceremony: Indigenous research methods*. Halifax: Fernwood Publishing.
- Wilson, S. (1996). *Gwitch'in native elders: Not just knowledge but a way of looking at the world*. Fairbanks: Alaska Native Knowledge Network.

Required Supplementary Readings

Depending on student interests, and at the instructor's discretion there may be changes (additions/deletions) to this list. Readings will be available via the ANKN Moodle or e-reserve.

- Alaska Native Educators, A. o. (2000). *Guidelines for respecting cultural knowledge*. Fairbanks: Alaska Native Knowledge Network.
- Archibald, J. (2008). *Indigenous storywork: Educating the heart, mind, body, and spirit*. Vancouver, BC: UBC Press. (selected chapters)
- Barker, R. (1996). *A right mind to think with: A Yup'ik theory of human development*. Unpublished M.Ed. Project, University of Alaska Fairbanks, Fairbanks.
- Battiste, M. (2008). Research ethics for protecting Indigenous knowledge and heritage: Institutional and researcher responsibilities. In N. K. Denzin, Y. S. Lincoln & L. T. Smith (Eds.), *Handbook of critical and Indigenous methodologies* (pp. 497-509). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Craig, R. (1999). Inupiaq region: Process of interviewing. *Sharing our Pathways: A Newsletter of the Alaska Rural Systemic Initiative*, 4(1), 13.
- Delgado-Gaitan, C. (1993). Researching change and changing the researcher. *Harvard Educational Review*, 63(4), 389-411.
- Fixico, D. L. (1998). Ethics and responsibilities in writing American Indian history. In D. A. Mihesuah (Ed.), *Natives and academics: Researching and writing about American Indians* (pp. 84-99). Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press.
- Guidelines for research. (1993). Anchorage, AK: Alaska Federation of Natives.
- Ilutsik, E. (1999). Traditional Yup'ik knowledge - lessons for all of us. *Sharing our Pathways: A Newsletter of the Alaska Rural Systemic Initiative*, 4(4), 1, 8-11.
- Jones, A., & Jenkins, K. (2008). Rethinking collaboration: Working the indigene-colonizer hyphen. In N. K. Denzin, Y. S. Lincoln & L. T. Smith (Eds.), *Handbook of critical and Indigenous methodologies* (pp. 471-486). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Leonard, B. (2009). Deg Xinag oral traditions: Reconnecting Indigenous language and education through traditional narratives. In M. Williams (Ed.), *The Alaska Native reader: History, culture, politics* (pp. 123-144). Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Littlefield, R. (1999). Elders in the classroom. *Sharing our Pathways: A Newsletter of the Alaska Rural Systemic Initiative*, 4(2), 8-9.
- Mather, E. (1995). With a vision beyond our immediate needs: Oral traditions in an age of literacy. In P. Morrow & W. Schneider (Eds.), *When our words return: Writing, hearing and remembering oral traditions of Alaska and the Yukon* (pp. 13-26). Logan: Utah State University Press.

- Meyer, M. A. (2008). Indigenous and authentic: Hawaiian epistemology and the triangulation of meaning. In N. K. Denzin, Y. S. Lincoln & L. T. Smith (Eds.), *Handbook of critical and Indigenous methodologies* (pp. 217-232). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Smith, G. H. (2000). Protecting and respecting indigenous knowledge. In M. Battiste (Ed.), *Reclaiming Indigenous voice and vision* (pp. 209-224). Vancouver: UBC Press.
- St. Denis, V. (1992). Community-based participatory research: Aspects of the concept relevant for practice. *Native Studies Review*, 8(2), 51-74.
- Stewart, G. (2007). Kaupapa Maori Science. Unpublished Ed.D. Thesis, University of Waikato.
- Wright, M. H. (1995). *The last great Indian war (Nulato 1851)*. Unpublished M.A. Thesis, University of Alaska Fairbanks: Department of Anthropology, Fairbanks.

Videos:

[Arizona Native Net](#)

[Castellano, M \(n.d.\). Bridging Worldviews: An Approach to Ethical Research with Indigenous Peoples](#)

<http://www.nptao.arizona.edu/research/castellano.cfm>

[Maldonado, R. P. \(n.d.\). Navajo Nation Research Protocols \(Navajo Nation Institutional Review Board Member\)](#)

<http://www.nptao.arizona.edu/research/maldonado.cfm>

[NGĀ PAE O TE MĀRAMATANGA](#)

[Hikuroa, D. \(2009\). Seminar Series-Integrating Indigenous Knowledge with Science \(42:00\)](#)

<http://mediacentre.maramatanga.ac.nz/content/integrating-indigenous-knowledge-science>

[Smith, L. T. \(2008\). Traditional Knowledge Conference, Opening Address \(25:58\)](#)

<http://mediacentre.maramatanga.ac.nz/content/opening-address-professor-linda-tuwai-smith>



Te Kawa a Māui

MAOR 317

**Special Topic: Science
and Indigenous
Knowledge**

Tēnā koutou. Greetings, and welcome to MAOR 317, Science and Indigenous Knowledge. This outline contains important information for your journey through the issues that will be canvassed in MAOR 317.

E tipu, e rea mō nga rā o tōu ao

1 KO NGĀ WHAKAHAERE

Course Administration

1.1 Ko te Pūkenga

Course Coordinator

Dr Ocean Mercier
Room 207, 50 Kelburn Parade
Telephone 463 7457
Email ocean.mercier@vuw.ac.nz

2 KO NGĀ WHĀINGA ME NGĀ HUA

Course Aims and Learning Objectives

This course examines the involvement and engagement of Indigenous peoples in scientific endeavours (whether these be labelled Indigenous science or Western science), historically, in the present day, and in the future. Students will acquire an understanding of the philosophical differences between Western science (WS) and Indigenous knowledge (IK). From this, students will become better equipped to debate contemporary issues, particularly regarding new technologies, at the interface of various cultures' ways of thinking.

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

- justify the use of the term “Indigenous science” or “Native science”
- analyse and understand the philosophical differences between Indigenous peoples' (particularly Māori) and “Western” ideologies
- give examples and discuss case studies of Indigenous scientific methodologies
- describe and articulate some Indigenous viewpoints on contentious scientific issues
- understand the challenges facing Indigenous people who wish to engage in “Western” science and technologies, and
- discuss some of the benefits and challenges that await Indigenous nations who wish to work together on research projects and educational initiatives.

3 KO NGĀ KAUPAPA MATUA

Course Content

The main themes of the course are:

- what is Science?
- what is Indigenous knowledge?
- what is the “Interface”?
- intersections between Global and Local knowledge
- Indigenous knowledge in an international context, and
- Indigenous peoples' engagement with science.

At the end of this course, students will be expected to:

- analyse and critique ideas and identify the issues for those working at the interface, in both written and oral forms

- understand the issues that militate against full participation by Indigenous peoples in “Western” science, and suggest ways that these difficulties can be alleviated
- engage in debates, both written and oral, around ownership of knowledge at the interface
 - with a full command of the important terminologies in “interface” discussions, and an appreciation of the limitations of these
 - with a knowledge of the similarities and differences in worldview for Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples
 - with a cognizance of issues for cross-cultural engagement in the interface eg socio-economic, political, philosophical, and
- make a critical comparative analysis of situations for different Indigenous peoples that is grounded in current literature by both Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples.

4 KO NGĀ PUKAPUKA

Essential Texts

4.1 Required Text

Students are required to purchase the Course Reader, *MAOR 317 Special Topic: Science and Indigenous Knowledge*, from the Student Union Building for a cost of approximately \$40. You should purchase this early in order to get a head start on your readings. All previous year’s versions of the course reader are also suitable.

10 KO NGĀ PUKAPUKA

Reference Texts

A variety of texts have been placed on Closed Reserve and 3-day Loan at Te Pātaka Kōrero/The University Library (Levels 2 and 3 respectively) to assist you with your study and essay writing. Students should return Library books by the due date to avoid Library fines.

The following list gives references that may be useful for the essay topics in the course. Note that the full text of the Elsdon Best monographs is available via MyGateway.info. More details on how to access these are available on Blackboard.

Battiste, Marie and Henderson, Sakej Youngblood, 2000. *Protecting indigenous knowledge and heritage : a global challenge*. Saskatoon: Purich Pub.

Best, Elsdon, 1955. *The Astronomical Knowledge of the Maori. Dominion Museum Monograph no. 3* Wellington: Government Printer.

Best, Elsdon, 1959. *The Maori Division of Time. Dominion Museum Monograph no. 4* Wellington: Government Printer.

Best, Elsdon, 1923. *Polynesian Voyagers. The Maori as a Deep-sea Navigator, Explorer, and Colonizer. Dominion Museum Monograph no. 5* Wellington: Government Printer.

- Cajete, Gregory, 2000. *Native Science. Natural Laws of Interdependence*. Santa Fe: Clear Light Publishing.
- Dei, George J. Sefa, 2011. *Indigenous Philosophy and Critical Education: A Reader*. New York: Peter Lang Publishers Inc.
- Deloria, Vine, 1997. *Red Earth White Lies. Native Americans and the Myth of Scientific Fact*. Colorado: Fulcrum Publishing.
- Goldie, W. H., 1904. *Maori Medical Lore*. Papakura: Southern Reprints (1998).
- Kawagley, Angayuqaq Oscar, 2006 (2nd ed.). *A Yupiaq Worldview: a pathway to ecology and spirit*. Long Grove, Ill.: Waveland Press.
- Ladyman, James, 2002. *Understanding Philosophy of Science*. London: Routledge.
- McLean, Robert and Tricia Smith, 2001. *The Crown and Flora and Fauna: Legislation, Policies and Practices 1983-98. Waitangi Tribunal Research Series Wai 262 (1997)*. Wellington: Waitangi Tribunal.
- Nakata, Martin, 2007. *Disciplining the savages: savaging the disciplines*. Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press.
- Peat, F. David, 2002. *Blackfoot physics : a journey into the Native American universe*. Grand Rapids, MI : Phanes Press.
- Riley, Murdoch, 1994. *Māori Healing and Herbal. New Zealand Ethnobotanical Sourcebook*. Paraparaumu: Viking Sevenses N.Z. Ltd.
- Whitt, Laurelyn, 2009. *Science, colonialism, and indigenous peoples: the cultural politics of law and knowledge*. Cambridge, N.Y: Cambridge University Press.
- Williams, David, 2001. *Matauranga Maori and Taonga. Waitangi Tribunal Research Series Wai 262 (1997)*. Wellington: Waitangi Tribunal.
- Williams, P. M. E. 1996. *Te Rongoa Maori. Maori Medicine*. Auckland: Reed.

CCS/ED604, UAF and MAOR317, VUW Student Moodle Exchange Guidelines for Participation

Monday, Sep 20th – Friday, Oct 8th 2010

Over a three-week period, Alaska and New Zealand students in Indigenous Knowledge courses will have the opportunity to exchange their ideas via an ANKN Moodle Forum related to readings assigned to both groups:

Leonard, Beth, 2009. Deg Xinag oral traditions: Reconnecting Indigenous language and education through traditional narratives. In M. Williams (Ed.), *The Alaska Native reader: History, culture, politics* (pp. 91-105). Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Stewart, Georgina, 2007. Chapter 5 Mātauranga Māori Motuhake in *Kaupapa Māori Science*. PhD thesis: University of Waikato, New Zealand.

These are available on the UAF Moodle.

Key Dates:

- **Sep 13:** Readings available online and ANKN Moodle registration available for NZ students.
- **Sep 13-22:** ED/CCS 604 students develop initial comments and questions related to the Stewart and Leonard readings.
- **Sep 20:** First videoconference meeting of students (5:15-6:30 pm AST/2:15-3:30 pm Wellington). Activities will consist of a short lecture by each instructor, with time for questions and comments by students.
- **Sep 22:** Deadline for e-mailing initial questions/comments to Beth; Moodle forum will open for postings and discussions.
- **Oct 4:** Second videoconference organized by students (6:15-7:30pm AST/3:15-4:30pm Wellington) – instructors will post guidelines and suggestions on the Moodle for your review.
- **Oct 4-8:** Final week for posting (however, we encourage you to continue your online conversations for as long as you wish beyond this date)

Forum Guidelines for 604 Students

CCS/ED604 students will work together in groups (see below) to draft 1-2 questions and initial comments related to these readings (VUW students will also be drafting their own questions/comments for posting on the forum). As groups will be working on this assignment outside of class time, group members will need to arrange to connect via the teleconference bridge, Skype, a chat forum, and/or e-mail.

Each group will post questions/initial comments to the forum **as discussion threads** by Sep 22. Once the forum is posted, you will need to begin reading the posts by other groups and the VUW students, then individually choose discussions to engage in/respond to.

Question to consider as you draft your initial comments on these readings

Does either reading relate to your current research or study interests?

Assessment:

CCS/ED604 students – participation and writing is worth 100 points or 20% of your final mark. You will be assessed on the organization and content of your initial post (this should be approximately one page), and subsequently, the depth or degree to which you engage with classmates **and** New Zealand students on the themes/threads, or variations. As well as putting forth your own ideas related to the questions given, posts should engage with the ideas of those who have posted before you. Conversation is key. Please remember that this is a formal writing assignment.

Forum Exchange Evaluation:

The Internal Review Board (IRB) at UAF has approved an instructor-initiated course evaluation of the forum exchange teaching activity. This will entail having you fill out a feedback form. You may also be invited for follow-up interviews with either Beth or Ocean

for the purposes of a presentation and a paper. You are in no way obligated to participate in the evaluation.

After marks are assigned for the forum assessment, we may also seek your consent to use selected quotes from posts to the forum and quotes from the recording of the videoconference, for use in the research leading to the presentation and paper. You are in no way obligated to participate in this research. Choosing not to participate will in no way impact upon your final mark. If you do elect to be involved, you can choose whether quotes are attributed to you by name, by a pseudonym of your choosing, or not at all.

Internet forum etiquette:

In your postings to the forums, we know that you will all observe the number one guideline: respect. Beth Leonard and Ocean Mercier will be monitoring and, if necessary, moderating posts to the Moodle. If you feel the respect guideline has not been adhered to in any particular instance, please don't hesitate to approach either one of us.

Videoconferences have been scheduled for the following venues and times:

VUW (Wellington, NZ): 2:15-3:30pm, Tue Sep 21st (NZDT) *RB105 - West side on the 1st floor of the library building*

UAF (Fairbanks, AK, USA): 5:15-6:30pm, Mon Sep 20th (Alaska DT)

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VUW (Wellington, NZ): 3:15-4:30pm, Tue Oct 5th (NZDT) *RB105 - West side on the 1st floor of the library building*

UAF (Fairbanks, AK, USA): 6:15-7:30pm, Mon Oct 4th (Alaska DT)

Bunnell 239

During these conferences, you will have a chance to meet the other cohort of students face-to-face via a video link-up. You will be expected to introduce yourself and your area of interest. MAOR317 students may also be expected to present a brief synopsis of their local knowledge project.

Example: Questions drafted by Fall 09 students

- What are some broader implications or impacts of misinterpreting and devaluing Indigenous knowledges? (in science, education, or language/cultural revitalization efforts, for example)
- What happens when researchers describe Indigenous knowledges using Western research methods with a linguistic approach (English) that may not even have the words to adequately describe these concepts?

Example: Exchange from Fall 09 Discussion Thread

Initial post:

Indigenous Knowledges are misunderstood and devalued because there is a perception or belief amongst most that these knowledge systems are primitive or obsolete. Many do not realize that the cultures and knowledge systems of our indigenous people are still strong, alive, and vibrant. This perception or belief can be attributed to the thinking or mindset that the "dominant" culture or colonial culture and knowledge systems are superior. The impact of this perception or belief is that indigenous people are continually having to assert or defend the validity of their knowledge. It is obstructive too the overall preservation and continuity of indigenous knowledge...

First response to post:

Kia ora , I see that your area of study is language revitalization and the protection of sacred and historical places. The 'dominant culture' complex you mention is a similar barrier that we have in Aotearoa. I see that your interests lie in language revitalization and the protection of sacred and historical places. It seems that most people in our group have responded to question two. The collective consensus of thoughts focuses on the ongoing affects of colonization as a major reason as to why Indigenous knowledge is often misunderstood and/ or devalued. Do you think this situation can change and if so what would the new space look like?...

Second response to post

Kia ora. I agree with you when you say that indigenous people have to constantly defend their natural position against the external influences. There is more than meets the eye when it comes to Indigenous Knowledge but outsiders will never understand that as they are not willing to even partake in the indigenous cultures as they are considered to be too barbaric or even too native. Here in New Zealand, for Maaori to claim under the Treaty Of Waitangi 1840, it is Maaori's responsibility to prove any wrong doings before they even get a chance to be heard from the Waitangi Tribunal. So where is the fairness in all of that? Cheers for your whakaaro (thoughts).