Course Delivery Guide

ARTH 315/CANS 315
Indigenous Art and Culture: Contemporary Indigenous Art in Canada
McGill University, Montreal, Canada
Fall 2020
Dr. Gloria Bell

This class will be taught using Zoom, Lectures: Tuesday and Thursday, 1:05-1:50 pm

- Learning activities including lectures and e-visits will be done using Zoom.
- Lectures and e-visits will be recorded and uploaded to MyCourses for asynchronous viewing. A variety of flexible learning media (films, audio tours) will be available and essential to course content.
- Students are expected to engage with course readings, lectures and all digital content.
- Professor Bell can be reached via email and during e-virtual office hours on Zoom: Mondays 1:40 pm – 2:40pm. Tuesdays 2:30pm – 3:30 pm.
- Methods of assessment: see detail from syllabus below

Midterm Exam 30%

The midterm will be based on lectures, assigned readings and media up until the midterm. The midterm will be a compare and contrast essay. Incorporate at least three readings into your response.

Midterm Distributed: October 13th at 2pm and due October 20th at 2pm on MyCourses – Note Use October 15th class time to work on the midterm

Research Paper Proposal, 10%

Upload a copy of your research proposal by November 5th (1pm) for an e-class peer-review activity. PeerGrade will be used by your peers to add respectful commentary and criticism of your research in progress. Please add commentary for two of your peers using the PeerGrade system on MyCourses. Guidelines will be provided.

Following the peer-review activity, Students will submit a 350 word abstract for the research paper proposal, and a one-page bibliography (typed, double-spaced, 12 point font) by November 10th (2pm) on MyCourses.

The abstract must include a thesis statement or hypothesis and a brief outline of the intended argument. The proposal must include a bibliography of at least five to seven academic sources. Students are welcome and encouraged to discuss potential topics with the instructor prior to submitting their paper proposal. The paper proposal will be returned with feedback the following week.
Possible research paper proposal topics:


Beadwork, Tufting and Quillwork: Examine the work of at least two contemporary artists that use “traditional” techniques and explore the resurgence of Indigenous methods and knowledges.

Queering the Canon: How and why are Indigenous artists queering the canon of art history? Examine the work of at least two artists.

The Imaginary Indian: How are contemporary curators and artists critiquing the Imaginary Indian in their work? Examine the work of at least two artists.

Unsettling the Archive: How are Indigenous artists responding to the colonial archive and why? Examine the work of at least two artists.

Indigenous Comics and Alternative Histories: How are Indigenous artists using comics and illustrated books to present Indigenous-centered histories? (see for example Louis Riel by Chester Brown)

**Knowledge Checks: 20%**

Students will complete knowledge checks during random weeks and the knowledge checks will be available outside of class time. The assessment will check your knowledge of the course content. The knowledge checks will be available for both synchronous and asynchronous completion on MyCourses.

You can prepare for these knowledge checks by completing all the mandatory readings and reviewing lectures and all class content.

4 checks in total. Your lowest score will be dropped.

**Research Paper: 40%**

The final research paper should demonstrate the ability to think creatively and critically about contemporary Indigenous Art and engage with the themes and debates central to the course.

An effective research paper will have a clear thesis statement and engage in visual analysis of two to three artworks.

**Visual analysis:** I recommend selecting two to three works of art and describing them in detail. You might choose to think about the artist and artworks in relation to Discourses of Sovereignty, Decolonizing Methods, Indigenous Visibility, Exhibition history of Indigenous Arts in Canada, Queering the Canon, Indigenous beadwork, quillwork, tufting and materiality studies, Indigenous Archives or another issue we have discussed in class or of your own initiative.

To inspire your research paper, I recommend reading contemporary scholarship in art journals *Art History, Journal of Material Culture Studies* and *American Indian Culture and Research Journal*. Look at the course outline.
Please also consult Sylvan Barnet’s *A Short Guide to Writing About Art* (8th edition) for a succinct overview on writing about art.

7-9 pages typed, double-spaced, with footnotes or endnotes, bibliography, images and image captions in Chicago citation style. (*Please note, bibliography and images are IN ADDITION to the 7-9 page essay).*

Due December 1st on MyCourses.

- Written and verbal feedback will be provided throughout the course as appropriate. A Frequently Asked Questions discussion group on MyCourses will be created for student questions. A Film and Media Discussion group on MyCourses will also be created for students to post questions, respond to each other and engage in asynchronous discussion.

- Please be respectful of your peers, the instructor and yourself during all communication

The terms of this guide are subject to modification as conditions change, in order to provide for flexibility and to optimize course delivery. Course requirements set out in the Course Syllabus (to be distributed in the first week of class) are not subject to modification.