

FMED 506: Indigenous Perspectives: Decolonizing Approaches to Indigenous Health

Course Dates Thursdays, (9:25am – 11:35am)

September 9, 23, October 7 (3 hours tentative), 21, November 4, 18

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Office Hours Meeting appointments via e-mail

Course Overview

This course will explore the nature of Indigenous peoples' ways of understanding the world and cultural ways of knowing and doing, with a special focus on health and wellness. It will review the Canadian history of colonization, assimilation and genocide as well as the outcomes and impacts through the lens of Indigenous peoples. The course will review and discuss the gradual powershift as Indigenous scholars, students and communities increasingly participate, share and control the research agenda of their health and wellness. Stories from Indigenous knowledge holders, medicine people, health professionals and both established and future scholars will reflect what communities see as being important for researchers and clinicians to know, understand and practice. The course will draw strongly stories, lectures, readings and group discussions to reach its objectives.

Students will reflect on the divergences between Western and Indigenous knowledge and praxis and deconstruct personal perspectives and previous held information and concepts. They will have the opportunity to develop personal perspectives relating to the importance and relevance of Indigenous perspectives and the need to embrace an inclusive, integrated, wholistic, and intercultural approach to health and wellness.

Objectives: Through participation in this course, students will:

- Collectively explore, the nature of Indigenous peoples' ways of understanding the world, Indigenous ways of knowing, and ways of doing.
- Understand the wholistic perspectives of Indigenous health and wellness including living in balance and mind-body-spirit connection.
- Review the history of colonization, assimilation and genocide in North America and specifically Canada and the impact on nations, communities and individuals through an Indigenous lens.
- Reflect on the divergences between Western and Indigenous knowledge and praxis and to deconstruct previous held information, concepts and personal perspectives on Indigenous world view and ways, and western history.
- Recognize the value of embracing an inclusive, integrated, wholistic, and intercultural approach to health and wellness.
- Appreciate and be able to begin to engage in culturally safe health research with Indigenous communities.

FMED 506: Indigenous Perspectives: Decolonizing Approaches to Indigenous Health**Class Overviews****Class 1: Indigenous Cosmology**

In this class we shall explore Indigenous values and world view; reflect on topics of the collective, relationships; rituals and ceremonies; Creation Story; and spirituality as a way of life

Readings

- *Haudenosaunee Creation Story*
- *Anishnaabe Creation Story*
- *A Basic Call to Consciousness*, Akwesasne Notes, Akwesasne Territory (1992).
- Brascoupe, S & Waters, C. (2009) *Cultural Safety Exploring the Applicability of the Concept of Cultural Safety to Aboriginal Health and Community Wellness*, National Aboriginal Health Organization Pages 6-21.

Class 2: Indigenous Health and Wellness

We shall explore what health and wellness mean from an Indigenous perspective, Indigenous knowledge and customs relating to health and live from pregnancy through death; the role of traditional healers; and medicine wheel teachings.

Readings

- Robbins J. & Dewar J. (2011) *Traditional Indigenous Approaches to Healing and the Modern Welfare of Traditional Knowledge, Spirituality and Lands: A critical reflection on practices and policies taken from the Canadian Indigenous Example*. The International Indigenous Policy Journal V2 I4 Traditional Knowledge, Spirituality, and Lands Article 2
- Mark GT & Lyons AC, (2010) *Maori healers' views on wellbeing: The importance of mind, body, spirit, family and land*, School of Psychology, Massey University, North Shore Library Building, Albany Village, Auckland, New Zealand
- Dumont J (2014) *Definition of Wellness* National Native Addictions Partnership Foundation. Honoring our strengths: Indigenous Culture as Intervention in Addictions Treatment Project

Class 3: An Indigenous Perspective on the Colonization of Turtle Island

We shall explore Western world view and the divergences with Indigenous world views; colonization and the Doctrine of Discovery; the trauma of disease; colonization and assimilation efforts including forced religious conversions, capitalism, the introduction of technology; government legislation and policy; the residential school and 60's Scoop experience; and outcomes and impact on peoples whole health.

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*Tentative: Kairos Blanket Exercise

Readings

- Antone R & Hill D (1992) *Ethnostress the Disruption of the Aboriginal Spirit*, Tribal Sovereignty Associates, Hagersville, Ontario

Class 4: The Impact of Colonization on Indigenous Health

We shall review the status of health and illness within Indigenous populations; explore social and cultural determinants of health; review the concept of ethnostress, and the impact of the Western concepts of health and illness on Indigenous population.

Readings

- Loppie C. & Wein F. (2009) *Health Inequalities & Social Determinant of Aboriginal Peoples Health*, National Collaborating Center for Aboriginal Health

Class 5: Decolonizing Approaches & Processes to Indigenous Health

We shall explore decolonizing approaches and methodologies, Indigenous resiliency and reconciliation between Indigenous populations and western researchers and health professionals and cultural safety. We shall project the potential outcomes and impacts decolonizing ways in health research can contribute to the healing and wellness of Indigenous peoples, communities and nations.

Readings

- Kirmayer L, Dandeneau S, Marshall, Phillips M, & Williamson (2016) *Rethinking Resilience from Indigenous Perspectives*, (2016) Can J Psychiatry. 56(2):84–91
- Richmond C., Cook C., *Creating Conditions for Canadian Aboriginal Health Equity* (2016). Public Health Reviews (2016) 37:2
- *Truth & Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action* (2012), Truth & Reconciliation Commission of Canada. Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada.

Class 6: Indigenized Approaches to Health Research – We shall examine contemporary growth in Indigenous health and health research projects, their potential outcomes and impacts; understand how decolonizing ways in health research can contribute to the healing and wellness of Indigenous peoples, communities and nations.

Readings

- Hovey R., Delormier T., McComber A., *Social Relational Understandings of Health International Journal of Indigenous Health*, (2014) Volume 10, Issue 1
- Tremblay M-C., Martin D., McComber A., McGregor A., Macaulay A. (2018) *Understanding community-based participatory research through a social movement*

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framework: a case study of the Kahnawake Schools Diabetes Prevention Project. BMC Public Health (2018) 18:487

- *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (2008) United Nations

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Evaluation

| Assignment | Due Date | Final Grade |
|---|---|--------------------|
| Attendance & Class Participation | Weekly | 10% |
| 3 Reflective Blogs The student will complete 3 blogs where they will share their personal reflections (understanding, questioning, impact on previous-held beliefs, etc.,) on the topics covered in the previous class(es). Length between 1 – 2 pages double-space. | Due before: Class #2 Class #4 After Class #6 | 30% |
| Quiz Includes topics of Indigenous world views and cosmology, Indigenous health and wellness, colonization, and the impacts on people and community. *Required to be completed in a class group | Complete before Class #5 | 25% |
| Reflective Talking Circle Students participate in talking circle, 5 minutes response to the question: “What have I learned about Indigenous perspectives on health research and how has this journey personally impacted on me?” | During Class #6 | 10% |
| Journal Article Review Students will select a current article (since 2010) an aspect of Indigenous health and wellness and provide an analysis that includes: article summary, discussion and its potential contributions to the field of Indigenous health research and decolonizing approaches *The article must be approved by the instructor | One week after Class #6 | 25% |

FMED 506: Indigenous Perspectives: Decolonizing Approaches to Indigenous Health**Additional Course Materials**

The course will be supplemented with live presentations and videos featuring Indigenous Elders and Knowledge Holders, Indigenous based and owned research projects, and community programs. There may also be supplemental readings provided.

McGill Policy Statements**Language of Submission**

“In accord with McGill University’s Charter of Students’ Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded. This does not apply to courses in which acquiring proficiency in a language is one of the objectives.” (Approved by Senate on 21 January, 2009)

« Conformément à la Charte des droits de l’étudiant de l’Université McGill, chaque étudiant a le droit de soumettre en français ou en anglais tout travail écrit devant être noté (sauf dans le cas des cours dont l’un des objets est la maîtrise d’une langue). »

Academic Integrity

“McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures” (see McGill’s guide to academic honesty for more information). (Approved by Senate on 29 January 2003)

« L’université McGill attache une haute importance à l’honnêteté académique. Il incombe par conséquent à tous les étudiants de comprendre ce que l’on entend par tricherie, plagiat et autres infractions académiques, ainsi que les conséquences que peuvent avoir de telles actions, selon le Code de conduite de l’étudiant et des procédures disciplinaires (pour de plus amples renseignements, veuillez consulter le guide pour l’honnêteté académique de McGill). »