

## Course Outline – Indigenous Field Studies

### General Information

Course # IDFC 500

Section # 01

Term/Year Summer Session I 2021

Course pre-requisite(s): Consult your specific faculty

Course schedule: See below

Number of credits: 3

Course location: McGill campus, day trips

### Instructor(s) (& TA) Information

Prof. Nicole Ives, MSW, PhD

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Elder [to be added], Cultural Consultant

PhD Candidate Ben Geboe (Social Work), Course Coordinator

Pamela Weightman, Administrative Support

### Dates (attendance at all sessions is compulsory)

MCGILL-BASED SESSIONS, Location TBD (all day)

- Monday, May 3, 2020
- Wednesday, May 5
- Friday, May 7
- Monday, May 10
- Wednesday, May 12
- Friday, May 14

FIELD TRIPS (TBD)

- Monday, May 17 - Friday, May 21

MCGILL-BASED DEBRIEFING SESSIONS (Location TBD)

- Wednesday, May 26
- Thursday, May 27
- Friday, May 28

MCGILL-GROUP PRESENTATIONS (including communal lunch) - Location TBD

- Monday, May 31 - 9:00 am – 5:00 pm

### Extraordinary Circumstances

In the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the University's control, the content and/or

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evaluation scheme in this course is subject to change.

## Course Overview

This course provides an opportunity for students from Social Work, Law, Medicine, Anthropology, Education and the Indigenous Studies Minor to learn about Indigenous cultures and worldviews, with a particular emphasis on Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) teachings and their connection to the students' areas of practice. During this 4-week intensive course (including field trips in the local area), students are introduced to Kanien'kehá:ka customs, values and ways of life through daily activities/workshops led by a Kanien'kehá:ka elder and other community members and guests, with support from McGill instructors. Attention will also be given to the intergenerational effects of colonization and Canadian policies within contemporary Indigenous society.

The objective of this course is to provide a holistic approach to learning about Indigenous cultures. The course contains physical, emotional, intellectual, psychological and spiritual components, with the intent that the students will be immersed in cultural activities throughout the course. Students will participate in activities, workshops, ceremonies and hands-on learning led by community facilitators held both at McGill and at other locations in Kanien'kehá:ka territories. Day trips during the course may involve rugged field conditions and varying weather for which students must be prepared and equipped. There is the possibility for an overnight trip, pending COVID guidelines. On-campus sessions will provide foundational information and context from each of the participating disciplines, as well as structured and unstructured opportunities for debriefing.

## Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

- Develop a preliminary understanding of the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) worldviews
- Connect Haudenosaunee cultures, traditions, values and beliefs to their areas of practice
- Identify key values, symbols, beliefs and protocols of Haudenosaunee cultures
- Understand the unique role of women in Haudenosaunee cultures
- Understand the important role of Elders in Haudenosaunee cultures
- Understand and confront ongoing colonization and oppression of Indigenous communities, families and individuals, such as the consequences of residential schooling, the Indian Act and other Canadian laws and policies
- Identify initiatives that specific Indigenous communities are undertaking to promote/maintain the intellectual, physical, emotional, psychological and spiritual wellness of their people
- Deepen their understanding of how culture, tradition, family and community can be resources that promote health, wellness and resilience in Indigenous contexts

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## Instructional Method

### Approach to Teaching & Learning

**This course is structured within an experiential and collaborative pedagogical model that emphasizes participatory learning, with the understanding that active student engagement supports the development of a rich learning environment for all.** Since individual and group activities are an integral part of the course, **attendance and group contributions are required.** Self-reflection, the open exchange of ideas, and critical analysis are encouraged throughout the course. Taking a critical perspective on the course material allows space for us to question values, assumptions, and practices that might be taken for granted, as well as the influence of social location and power dynamics.

### Course Format

This course consists of classroom sessions at McGill University, day trips and one possible overnight trip. Sessions relating to each of the participating disciplines will be conducted to provide a context for students prior the field trips. Debriefing sessions and a full day of group presentations will conclude the course.

The course will be administered through a variety of teaching methods, including:

- Lectures, workshops and presentations
- Sharing circles
- Ceremonies
- Group projects

## Course Materials

**Required:** Course pack (available at the McGill Bookstore)

## Course Content

Seven required classroom lectures (prior to the field week), including an orientation session (McGill campus) prior to the field portion to discuss:

- Course outline and schedule
- What is expected of students in terms of participation
- History of the Iroquois Confederacy
- Haudenosaunee worldviews
- Canadian laws and policies and their historical and contemporary effects on all aspects of life of the Indigenous people of Canada
- Approaches to healing in Haudenosaunee communities
- Working with Indigenous populations as an “outsider”, as an “insider”
- Additional specific content as related to each discipline (anthropology, law, social work, medicine)
- Uses of time during field component
- Required equipment
- Protocols

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- Division of work (cooking, cleaning, etc.) and the importance of working as a team
  - Safety issues during the field week
  - Dealing with conflict

Four required sessions (McGill campus) after the field portion in order to discuss:

- Multidisciplinary approaches to working with Indigenous communities
- Specific content as related to discipline
- Integration of course readings, activities, site visits, and presentations
- Final written assignment
- Students' reflections on their experiences
- Questions/concerns
- Group presentations (final session)

**Proposed Activities** (subject to change)

Each workshop/activity/site visit is preceded by a discussion of the history and protocols associated with it as well as a discussion of its present-day context in Indigenous communities.

Beading with Pauline Loft

- Traditional Haudenosaunee designs and what they symbolize
- What is the importance of beading in Haudenosaunee culture?
- Beading activity

Films by First Nations, Métis and Inuit filmmakers and guest speakers

- Community members featured in the documentary Club Native share their experiences of dealing with the community's policies on Mohawk identity

Presentation by Pakesso Mukash

- Pakesso is a Cree musician and host of Konnected.tv

Ohenten Kariwatekwen (Thanksgiving Address)

- Explanation of other cleansing rituals

Law presentation

- Presentation on the evolution of courts/justice in Kahnawake
- Presentation on Kahnawake's restorative justice program

Medicine Walk

- Traditional and medicinal uses of plants

The Wampum Chronicles with Darren Bonaparte

- A living history presentation of the Mohawk Nation and the Haudenosaunee Confederacy

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There is a possibility of additional outings such as:

- visiting the First Nations Garden at Montreal's Botanical Gardens
- a walking tour of Montreal to visit First Nations, Inuit and Métis historical landmarks
- a possible overnight stay at Droulers/Tsionhiakwatha Archaeological Site Interpretation Center, a life-size reconstruction of an Iroquoian village in Saint-Anicet, Quebec
- visiting the Montreal Museum of Archaeology and History (Pointe-à-Callière)

Due to COVID restrictions, all workshops/activities/site visits are subject to change.