

Brief Course Outline

Course Title: Narrating Cultures

Course Number and Section:

CGS

4017F 550

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Disclaimer: Information in the brief course outline is subject to change. The syllabus posted on OWL is the official and authoritative source of information for the course.

Course Description:

This course examines the ways in which Indigenous peoples enact self-determination through cinematic film. To understand the significance of Indigenous-made feature films, the course begins by exploring central concepts such as culture, collective identity, representation, and decolonization/decoloniality. These concepts are studied from a global perspective and in relation to the historical claims of Indigenous peoples for autonomy over their territories.

The course aims to help students discover and appreciate the importance of films in representing Indigenous ways of knowing and living in diverse ways. By discovering recent Indigenous films, students will be able explain how these films reflect specific storytelling traditions and how these forms of representation are embedded in a wider global context that includes colonialism, the expansion of global capitalism, dominant cinematic traditions (e.g., Hollywood), and the decolonization efforts by indigenous peoples around the world.

Learning Outcomes:

Outline the ways in which Indigeneity has been represented in dominant cinematic traditions and analyze the ways in which Indigenous films challenge such representations.

Mobilize (i.e., apply) critical understandings of decolonization in relation to filmmaking.

Identify some of the ways in which concepts such as culture, identity, and representation are mobilized in filmmaking by Indigenous peoples and their communities

Textbooks and Course Materials:

Links to readings and other course materials are available through the OWL course site.

Methods Of Evaluation:

Assignment	Due Date mm/dd/yy	Weight - %
Seminar Presentations (2)	Sign-up Sheet	30
Proposal	Week 7	15
Essay	Week 12	30

Assignment	Due Date mm/dd/yy	Weight - %
Class Engagement	ongoing	25

In solidarity with the Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee, Lūnaapéewak, and Chonnonton peoples on whose traditional treaty and unceded territories this course is shared.

Monday, August 25, 2025