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### **SP513 Indigenous Spiritualities and Christian Faith January Interterm 2021**

**PURPOSE:** Indigenous people take seriously their Indigenous and Christian heritage, but room has not always been made for the former by the latter. This course will investigate the historical relationship between the two with the goal of offering possible models for telling the two stories “side by side, until they can be told together.” To do this we will use the language of theology and work toward creating space where we can see examples of Indigenous Christian Faith.

**PREREQUISITES:** None

#### **COMPETENCE OBJECTIVES:**

1. Define the broad parameters of Indigenous Spirituality and Christian Faith with accuracy and respect.
2. Begin to discuss, articulate, formulate and critique the questions that are used to explore Christian faith and Indigenous spirituality. (i.e. are we being fair to both?)
3. Begin to be able to compare and contrast Indigenous Spiritualities including Indigenous Christian Spirituality.
4. Document the environmental, cultural, and historical influences shaping the relationship between Christian faith and Indigenous spiritualities.
5. Discuss ways to hold together Indigenous Spirituality and Christian Faith. (i.e. fulfillment, contrasting, compatibility vs incompatibility...)
6. Begin to integrate and articulate one’s own views of Christian faith and Indigenous Spirituality.

**FORMAT AND CONTENT:** Typically, this is a two-week intensive course worth 3 credits. Since covid-19, the course is using zoom to function in an online environment. As well, it is possible to complete the course synchronously and asynchronously. If joining the daily intensive sessions synchronously, there are daily reading to be completed before class. Classes will follow a seminar approach using the movements of shared praxis along with an initial response followed by a considered response. Thus, the basic layout of the day is to respond to a particular topic in a journal followed by a reading and or various activities, which in turn is followed by a considered response. The assignments include assigned reading, journaling, short paper and final project.

#### **REQUIRED TEXTS:**

Treat, James (1996) *Native and Christian: Indigenous Voices on Religious Identity in the United States and Canada*. New York, Routledge.

Twiss, Richard. (2015) *Rescuing the gospel from the cowboys*. Downers Grove, Intervarsity

Williams, Rowan (2007) *Tokens of Trust*. Kentucky, HarperCollins, John Knox Press.

**RESERVES:** Texts will be available on 2-hour reserve. Any additional reading in the form of articles or portions of books, will be posted on canvas.

### **COURSE POLICIES**

1. **Attendance** Learners are required to attend all the class sessions.
2. **Reading and assignments** Students are expected to read all required assignments before class and to complete all assignments as outlined in the syllabus within the specified dates of the course and term.
3. **Submission of assignments**

Written assignments should follow the format set out by the *Society of Biblical Literature*. (A concise form of key examples may be found, free of charge, at <https://www.sbl-site.org/assets/pdfs/pubs/SBLHSupp2015-02.pdf>)

Please note the following additional criteria.

- All assignments must be submitted to the course Moodle page.
  - All assignments should have a title page containing all of the pertinent information.
  - All assignments will be double-spaced in 12 point New Times Roman.
  - All assignments must be submitted as Microsoft Word documents or PDF
  - File name submitted ***must*** begin with the student's surname and designate the particular assignment. (e. g. Smith Theology Paper 1.doc)
  - The professor will return all submissions to canvas.
4. **Academic honesty** Students are expected to adhere to VST's requirements for academic honesty as published in the Student Handbook.
  5. **Inclusive language** in speaking and writing, inclusive language is expected when making reference to humans and a variety of metaphors are anticipated when making reference to God.
  6. **Assignment and Course Evaluation**
    - Course evaluations at VST combine a letter grade system (A+ to B-; course failure is "Not Approved") including narrative comments based on the competencies of the course. No number grades or weights of assignments are calculated, nor are final grades given

numerical equivalents. However, the professor may use percentage to indicate the weight particular assignments have for determining the overall course.

- Individual assignments within a course are given narrative evaluations, that is, APP (Approved) or INC (Incomplete) with narrative comments, based on the competencies and expectations set for that assignment. The professor also may use percentage or letter grades to indicate his evaluation of the assignment. At least one re-write is allowed on any assignment that is INC. The re-written assignment is due two weeks after the work is returned. The final evaluation for an assignment can be APP or NAPP after a re-write.

#### 7. Late assignments

Submission of assignments on time is a part of academic, professional and pastoral competence and a part of every course at VST. All assignments in courses are due on the dates specified in the syllabus. Failure to submit an assignment on time will be noted in the narrative evaluation of an assignment. Repeated failure to submit assignments on time may affect the final grade for the course. All assignments must be completed in a manner that meets the expectations of the professor in order to receive a passing grade for the course.

#### 8. Limitation on use of social media

- Ordinarily, the use of electronic devices in the contexts of classrooms or meetings will be to support the learning, formation, or agenda at hand. As well, *any and all material from zoom classes, including screen capture pictures of fellow students, professors, and CTAs cannot be posted to Facebook or any other social media without the express consent of the effected individuals.*

9. VST is committed to creating safe space and an inclusive learning environment. If you have a diagnosed or suspected learning disability, chronic condition, mental health concern, or physical requirement which you anticipate may impact your participation in this class, you are encouraged to discuss your needs with the instructor and the Dean within the first week of classes.

### CALENDAR

Date	Topic	Reading	Discussion Leader for the day
Jan 4	Introduction: Spirituality and/or Faith	<b>Treat:</b> “Part One: Spirituality and History	Ray Aldred
Jan 5	Challenging the past: Newcomers and Indigenous people	<b>Twiss:</b> Chapters 1	
Jan 6	Historical models of engagement	<b>Twiss:</b> Chapter 2	
Jan 7	Covenants and Treaties	<b>Rowan</b> 57-80 <b>Treat:</b> “Part 2: Liberation and Culture”	
Jan 8	Creation Stories	<b>Rowans</b> 1-57 <b>Twiss:</b> Chapter 3	

Jan 11	Something Went Wrong: Now what do we do?	<b>Treat:</b> “Part 3 Tradition and Community”	
Jan 12	Models of healing or salvation?	<b>Treat:</b> “Part 3, Tradition and Community” <b>Rowan</b> 81-104 <b>Twiss:</b> Chapter 4	
Jan 13	The creation of stories	<b>Twiss:</b> Chapter 5	
Jan 14	Towards a desired end	<b>Rowen:</b> -105-159 <b>Treat:</b> “Part 4, Transformation and Survival” <b>Twiss:</b> Chapter 6	

### **EXPECTATIONS, ASSIGNMENTS AND EVALUATIVE CRITERIA**

1. **Reading and participation:** The course will require consistent ongoing reading in order for all the students to have a successful learning experience. Many of the classes will require advance reading in order to facilitate discussion. In most cases these will be chapters from your required textbooks (which we shall read in entirety by the course end), in other cases these will be articles or chapters from various books which will be given to you one or two classes in advance. Each learner will make at least one post for each reading of at least 250 words. The post will evaluate how each class session contributed to the overall task of holding Indigenous Spirituality and Christian Faith in relationship. This assignment enables the learner to begin to learn the jargon to discuss Indigenous Spirituality and Christian Faith.
2. **Reading Forum:** In preparation for each class the student will record in a journal 6 bulleted points from each of the authors assigned for reading. Three of these will be analytical stating what the author is saying and three of these points will be evaluative of something in the reading; raising a question, offering a critique or extending the idea. The journal will also include a summary of the class discussion around the topic for the day. Journals will be submitted online. If the journal is handwritten, please make sure your writing is legible to the professor. Submit your journal in a scanned pdf or a word document. This assignment will help the learner to begin to formulate their own thoughts in synthesis with the subject of the class. **Due January 29**
3. **Short Essays:** Each learner will write two short essays (4-5 typed double spaced pages) in which they begin to formulate the task of holding together Indigenous Spirituality and Christian Faith. Essay #1 will focus upon a particular Indigenous Spirituality or a description of pan-Indigenous North American Spirituality. **Due Feb 19** Essay #2 will focus upon the learners own particular expression of Christian faith. **Due March 19.** This assignment moves the learner toward formulating their own understanding of each of these topics.

4. **Research Paper or Project:** The default requirement is that each student is required to produce one 10-12 page research paper on a topic to be approved by the instructor. However, I am open to other kinds of projects for this class, but they must involve some kind of research. The instructor will discuss with each student not only the choice of an appropriate topic, but also the bibliography, the thesis statement and the project outline. The goal is for each student to produce a piece of work that is of a lasting value. A good research paper takes the student beyond class lectures, which are generally of a broad nature and designed to offer the big picture. **Due March 30**

The instructor must approve the topic for the research paper. Therefore, the **student will submit a prospectus of their research project**. The prospectus should be no longer than (1) **one** page in length and should contain a preliminary thesis as well as a provisional outline of the paper with a list of the significant resources. Appendix 2 contains a possible format for the prospectus. The *prospectus* is due **February 30**

The instructor reserves the right to not grade a project on a topic that has not been approved by him.

The project will be graded according to rubric in appendix 1 attached to the current syllabus.

#### **SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY**

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- Cruikshank, Julie. *Life Lived Like a Story : Life Stories of Three Yukon Elders*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1990.

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- . *I Have Lived Here since the World Began: An Illustrated History of Canada's Native People*. Toronto: Lester Publishing Limited & Key Porter Books, 1996.
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## APPENDIX 1

### Essay Evaluation Rubric

#### THE SUPERIOR PAPER (A range)

**Thesis:** Easily identifiable, plausible, novel, sophisticated, insightful, crystal clear.

**Structure:** Evident, understandable, appropriate for thesis. Excellent transitions from point to point. Paragraphs support solid topic sentences.

**Use of evidence:** Primary source information used to buttress every point with at least one example. Examples support mini-thesis and fit within paragraph. Excellent integration of quoted material into sentences.

**Analysis:** Author clearly relates evidence to mini-thesis; analysis is fresh and exciting, posing new ways to think of the material.

**Logic and argumentation:** All ideas in the paper flow logically; the argument is identifiable, reasonable, and sound. Author anticipates and successfully defuses counter-arguments; makes novel connections to outside material (from other parts of the class, or other classes) which illuminate thesis.

**Mechanics:** Sentence structure, grammar, and diction excellent; correct use of punctuation and citation style; minimal to no spelling errors; absolutely no run-on sentences or comma splices.

#### THE GOOD PAPER (B range)

**Thesis:** Promising, but may be slightly unclear, or lacking in insight or originality.

**Structure:** Generally clear and appropriate, though may wander occasionally. May have a few unclear transitions, or a few paragraphs without strong topic sentences.

**Use of evidence:** Examples used to support most points. Some evidence does not support point, or may appear where inappropriate. Quotes well integrated into sentences.

**Analysis:** Evidence often related to mini-thesis, though links perhaps not very clear.

**Logic and argumentation:** Argument of paper is clear, usually flows logically and makes sense. There is some evidence that counter-arguments acknowledged though perhaps not addressed. Occasional insightful connections to outside material made.

**Mechanics:** Sentence structure, grammar, and diction strong despite occasional lapses; punctuation and citation style often used correctly. Some (minor) spelling errors; may have one run-on sentence, sentence fragment, or comma splice

#### THE "NEEDS HELP" PAPER (Needs edits to be approved)



**Thesis:** May be unclear (contain many vague terms), appear unoriginal, or offer relatively little that is new; provides little around which to structure the paper.

**Structure:** Generally unclear, often wanders or jumps around. There are few or weak transitions, many paragraphs without topic sentences.

**Use of evidence:** Examples used to support some points. Points often lack supporting evidence, or evidence used where inappropriate (often because there may be no clear point). Quotes may be poorly integrated into sentences.

**Analysis:** Quotes appear often without analysis relating them to mini-thesis (or there is a weak mini-thesis to support), or analysis offers nothing beyond the quote.

**Logic and argumentation:** Logic may often fail, or argument may often be unclear. May not address counter-arguments or make any outside connections. May contain logical contradictions.

**Mechanics:** Problems in sentence structure, grammar, and diction (usually not major). There are errors in punctuation, citation style, and spelling. May have several run-on sentences or comma splices.

### **THE "TRULY NEEDED" PAPER (Needs edits and a rewrite to be approved)**

**Thesis:** Difficult to identify at all, may be bland restatement of obvious point.

**Structure:** Unclear, often because thesis is weak or non-existent. Transitions confusing and unclear. Few topic sentences.

**Use of evidence:** Very few or very weak examples. General failure to support statements, or evidence seems to support no statement. Quotes not integrated into sentences; "plopped in" in improper manner.

**Analysis:** Very little or very weak attempt to relate evidence to argument; may be no identifiable argument, or no evidence to relate it to.

**Logic and argumentation:** Ideas do not flow at all, usually because there is no argument to support. There is a simplistic view of topic; no effort to grasp possible alternative views. The paper has many logical contradictions, or simply too incoherent to determine.

**Mechanics:** Big problems in sentence structure, grammar, and diction. Frequent major errors in citation style, punctuation, and spelling. May have many run-on sentences and comma splices.

### **THE FAILING PAPER (Needs a complete reworking to be approved)**

Shows obviously minimal lack of effort or comprehension of the assignment. Very difficult to understand owing to major problems with mechanics, structure, and analysis. Has no identifiable thesis, or utterly incompetent thesis.

## Appendix 2 Research Prospectus Outline

“A research prospectus is a preliminary plan for conducting a study. This is not a detailed, technical research proposal, but, rather, a considered analysis of the issues you are likely to confront in such a study. In essence, it is a *preliminary* proposal. In completing this task, you should be sure to consider at least the following:”<sup>1</sup>

**Research Problem:** What is the research problem you are trying to solve? [A problem is a situation that, left untreated, produces a negative consequence for some group, institution or individual(s). “Girls score lower on technology aptitude scales than boys” isn’t necessarily a problem; “girls are less inclined to pursue careers in technology-related fields” is.] What makes it a problem? For whom? Who says so?<sup>2</sup>

**State the writing/research question or questions:**<sup>3</sup> For example, “My essay will explore the emancipatory effects of post-modernity. I want to explore how post-modernity has enabled some groups to talk about the inequality they have faced during modernity. As well, I want to focus upon the contribution these other groups may have to the dominant Western culture.”

**State a preliminary thesis statement:** For example: “Post-modernity is emancipatory for shame based cultures in their development of a communal theology.”

**Suggest how you will organize your material:** Will you use chronology? Will you use several significant examples?

**Provide an annotated bibliography of least 5 sources:** List the sources used correct documentation style along with a 2-3 sentence summary of the author’s argument. You may include class readings.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.coedu.usf.edu/.../ResearchProspectusPlanDirections.doc](http://www.coedu.usf.edu/.../ResearchProspectusPlanDirections.doc) accessed 8/30/2012

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.ic.arizona.edu/ic/mcbride/english/englpros.htm> accessed 8/20/2012