

**ENSC 594 Environmental Health of Indigenous Peoples**  
(Beginning FY 2020/2021, this course will be ENSC 508)

Spring 2020

Rosalyn LaPier  
T 8:00am-10:50am (with break)  
Office Hours: T 11:00-12:30pm or by appointment

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*Indigenous students (and those with similar protocols) are advised that the following course may contain the names, images, voices, descriptions and discussion of individuals who have passed on.*

**Course Description:**

There is a connection between the health of the natural world and the health of individuals. And for Native Americans, who are deeply tied to their landscapes, 'changes in the land' profoundly impact their health and well being. In this graduate seminar we will discuss the latest scholarship and science, and focus on fence posts that chronicle the Indigenous experience, including: Contact, Colonization, Contamination, and Climate Change. We will also discuss how to Communicate about science. We will study the past in order to understand the present. We will learn about four geographically diverse regions, including: the Pacific (Hawai'i), Canada (Great Plains & Northeast), Montana & the Arctic. We will also learn about contemporary efforts to improve Indigenous health, Indigenous activism and efforts to restore their environments.

"Environmental health is the science and practice of preventing human illness and promoting well-being by identifying environmental hazards that may adversely affect human health." NEHA

**Learning Goals and Outcomes:**

- Develop a broad understanding of the field of environmental studies & science, especially as it relates to the study of environmental issues of Indigenous communities;
- Discern different methodological approaches used within environmental studies;
- Improve intellectual skills of reading and writing by critically and effectively summarizing, analyzing and reflecting on scholarly and scientific works;
- And improve communication skills by listening to others, speaking publicly, and co-facilitating course discussion.

**Creating Community:**

Do your part to help create community within the course and among Environmental Studies students. This means: fully participating, attending class, being prepared for class, listening to others and being respectful. Showcase your intellectual curiosity by engaging with all types of ideas, not just the ones that interest you. And when you speak, remember to look at your classmates and engage in a conversation, do not look exclusively at the professor.

**Course Requirements and Readings: See weekly assignments.**

## **Weekly Schedule:**

### **Introduction: The Trouble with Wilderness & Communicating Science, Part 1**

Reading(s): William Cronon, ed., "The Trouble With Wilderness: Or, Getting Back to the Wrong Nature," *Uncommon Ground: Rethinking the Human Place in Nature*, New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1995, 69-90. ([https://www.williamcronon.net/writing/Trouble\\_with\\_Wilderness\\_Main.html](https://www.williamcronon.net/writing/Trouble_with_Wilderness_Main.html))

Alexander Koch, et.al., "European Colonisation of the Americas Killed 10% of World Population and Caused Global Cooling," *The Conversation*, January 31, 2019.

Courtney Mason, "Indigenous Protected Areas are the Next Generation of Conservation," *The Conversation*, November 29, 2018.

Week 1: (Jan 14) Read articles.

### **Part 1: Contact**

Reading: *Sharks Upon the Land: Colonialism, Indigenous Health, and Culture in Hawai'i, 1778-1855*, Seth Archer, Cambridge University Press, 2018.

Week 2: (Jan 21) Read Chpt. 1-3, New Books Network Podcast.

Week 3: (Jan 28 ) Read Chpt. 4-6, Book analysis Due Thursday.

### **Part 2: Colonization**

Reading: *Clearing the Plains: Disease, the Politics of Starvation, and the Loss of Aboriginal Life*. James Daschuk, University of Regina Press, 2013

Week 4: (Feb 4) Read Chpt. 1-6

Week 5: (Feb 11) Read Chpt. 7-9, Book analysis Due Thursday.

Reading: *Reproduction on the Reservation: Pregnancy, Childbirth, and Colonialism in the Long Twentieth Century*, Brianna Theobald, University of North Carolina Press, 2019.

Week 6: (Feb 18) Read Chpt. 1-3, New Books Network Podcast.

Week 7: (Feb 25 ) Read Chpt. 4-6, Book analysis Due Thursday.

### **Part 3: Contamination**

Reading: *Everyday Exposure: Indigenous Mobilization and Environmental Justice in Canada's Chemical Valley*, Sarah Marie Wiebe, University of British Columbia Press, 2017.

Week 8: (Mar 3) Read Chpt. [1-3], New Books Network Podcast.

Week 9: (Mar 10) Read Chpt. [4-6], Book analysis Due Thursday

Week: (Mar 17) SPRING BREAK

### **Communicating Science, Part 2**

Reading: John C. Besley and Anthony Dudo, "What it means to 'know your audience' when communicating about science," *The Conversation*, April 16, 2019.

Cristina Sanza, et.al., "Why we see hope for the future of science journalism," *The Conversation*, February 26, 2019. And others.

Week 10: (Mar 24) Read article(s)

#### **Part 4: Climate Change**

Reading: *The Right to Be Cold: One Woman's Fight to Protect the Arctic and Save the Planet from Climate Change*, Sheila Watt-Cloutier, University of Minnesota Press, 2018.

Week 11: (Mar 31) Read Chpt. 1-5

Week 12: (Apr 7) Read Chpt. 6-9, Book analysis Due Thursday

#### **Communicating Science, Part 3**

Jonathan Garlick, "To seek common ground on life's big questions, we need science literacy," *The Conversation*, December 17, 2014.

Andrew Hoffman, "The Limits of Intellectual Reason in Our Understanding of the Natural World," *The Conversation*, June 1, 2016. And others.

Week 13: (Apr 14) Read article(s)

Week 14: (Apr 21) Podcast Presentations & Peer Review

Week 15: (Apr 28) Podcast Presentations & Peer Review

Week 16: (May 5) Finals Week & Graduation

#### **GRADING:**

Class Participation & Co-Facilitation: 30 (15 weeks @ 2 points)

Book Analysis: 50 (5 @ 10 points)

Podcast: 20 (1 @ 20 points)

**GRADING:** Final Grade based on a percentage of Total Points (100).

#### **ASSIGNMENTS:**

##### Weekly Discussions & Participation:

Please carefully complete weekly readings before class time, and be prepared to respectfully participate in discussion. Our discussions of the readings will be divided into: 1) understanding the **content** of the readings as they relate to Indigenous peoples, health and the environment, 2) understanding the methodology of the scholars, their expertise, research, evidence and be prepared to **critique** the way they present information, 3) understanding and reflecting on **current issues** in relation to the themes of the course, please share what you read or hear, and 4) understand how scholars **communicate**, through writing or speaking, the science they research. We may have in-class writing assignments and/or peer review of student work. (2 points each week)

##### Co-Facilitation:

Each student will serve as a co-facilitator for class discussion during a week or more of class. This is an opportunity to engage in thoughtful scholarly critique about the reading for the week. Alone or with a partner develop a plan for stimulating discussion, whether it is a class activity, small

group discussions, bringing in outside materials such as podcast clips, and/or discussion questions posed to the class. Email the draft plan by Monday night before Tuesday class.

Book Summary/Analysis/Reflection:

The Summary/Analysis/Reflection should be about 1,300 words (200 word summary, 1,000 word analysis, 100 word personal reflection.) Focus on their scholarship & science of the author and our focus on Indigenous health & peoples. **Post by midnight on Thursday.** (5 @ 10 points each).

Podcast:

Create a 10 minute podcast episode— think critically about how the different forms (writing vs. speaking) allow for different kinds of questions and engagement with themes from the course. Use the podcast episode to illustrate themes from the course, elaborate on issues raised in the course and/or address new ideas from the course. (20 points)

The work you submit for grading must be your own original work, written or created by you specifically for this course. Any acts of plagiarism or academic dishonesty may result in academic penalization. **Please, no late assignments.**

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**UM Policies:**

**Attendance**

“Students are expected to attend all class meetings and complete all assignments for courses in which they are enrolled.... Instructors shall excuse absences for reasons of military service or mandatory public service.”<http://catalog.umt.edu/academics/policies-procedures>

**Cultural Leave**

“Cultural or ceremonial leave allows excused absences for cultural, religious, and ceremonial purposes to meet the student’s customs.”<http://catalog.umt.edu/academics/policies-procedures>

**Academic Honesty**

“All students must practice academic honesty.”  
<http://www.umt.edu/student-affairs/community-standards>

**Student Conduct Code**

“Being a student at UM presupposes a commitment to the principles and policies embodied in the Code.” <http://www.umt.edu/student-affairs/community-standards>

**Disability Student Services**

“Appropriate accommodations will be made by the University pursuant to the policies of the Disability Student Services.” <http://www.umt.edu/dss>