

GSWS 2291G 001/INDIGSTU 2682G 001/AH 2634G 001
Indigenous Women in the Arts in Canada: Cultural Traditions, Survival, and Colonial Resistance
Winter Term: January – April 2026
Lecture: Thursdays - 10:30 am - 1:30 pm

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

One of the main objectives of this course will be to unravel how human beings become categories that expand beyond the seemingly binary divide between the sexes, the races and the have and have-nots. We will consider the real-life experiences of women or two-spirit peoples through an examination of texts from the fields of anthropology, cultural studies, feminist studies, and queer studies, among others. In addition, our examination of popular culture, such as films, television shows, music videos, and clips from the internet, will provide thoughtful, and often provocative, examples of the complex representations of race, gender, class, and sexuality in our society.

Antirequisite(s): Indigenous Studies 2682F/G, Art History 2634F/G.

Prerequisite(s): Indigenous Studies 1020E, GSWS 1020E, or 1.0 course from GSWS 1021F/G, GSWS 1022F/G, GSWS 1023F/G, GSWS 1024F/G, or GSWS 1030F/G, or 1.0 from Art History 1640 or the former VAH 1040 or two of Art History 1641A/B, 1649A/B or the former VAH 1041A/B VAH 1045A/B, or 1.0 course or special permission from Program.

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION:

Contact Information:

Instructor: Dr. Renee E. Mazinegiizhigookwe Bedard

Email: rbedard4@uwo.ca

Students must use their Western (@uwo.ca) email addresses when contacting their instructor. Do not use personal email addresses. Please type “Course Code” at the beginning of each subject line so I know the email comes from a student in this class.

Office Hours: 1 hour – before class

Appointments: Students may make an appointment with the instructor outside of office hours for course related reasons. These meetings can be held in person at the instructor’s office or via zoom.

Land Acknowledgement:

We/I acknowledge that Western University is located on the traditional lands of the Anishinaabeg, Haudenosaunee, Lūnaapéewag) and Chonnonton Nations, on lands connected with the London Township and Sombra Treaties of 1796 and the Dish with One Spoon Covenant Wampum. With this, we/I respect the longstanding relationships that Indigenous Nations have to this land, as they are the original caretakers. We acknowledge historical and ongoing injustices that Indigenous Peoples (First Nations, Métis and Inuit) endure in Canada, and we accept responsibility as a public institution to contribute toward revealing and correcting miseducation as well as renewing respectful relationships with Indigenous communities through our teaching, research and community service.
<https://indigenous.uwo.ca/initiatives/land-acknowledgement.html>

Statement on Gender-based and Sexual Violence:

Western is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone through these traumatic events. If you have experienced gender-based or sexual violence (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts, [here](#). To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact support@uwo.ca.

Course Learning Outcomes:

Students who successfully complete this course will be able to:

1. *Demonstrate* a clear understanding of important course themes, theories, people, and processes in the history of Indigenous art and creativity;
2. *Develop* familiarity with key scholarship and theoretical considerations of Indigenous art and creativity as forms of political resistance, survival, decolonization, cultural resurgence, and historical experiences.
3. Be able to *critically analyse* Indigenous theories regarding art and creativity, current scholarship, and cultural experiences as they evolved historical and have continued relevancy today;
4. *Enhance* written, oral, and analytical skills through course readings, discussions, presentations, and written assignments.

COURSE READINGS & ART MATERIALS

COURSE READING MATERIALS:

There are no required textbooks and readings in this course. The course will rely on lecture materials. Videos, online catalogues, and websites will be reviewed. Traditional knowledge will be shared in the class that can't be found in books, articles or websites. All required readings are journal articles which can be found on **BRIGHTSPACE** for download.

ART MATERIALS:

Students can expect to spend between \$100-\$200 - depending on individual preferences for materials. At the end of the syllabus are tables with exact art materials that students will need to purchase to complete the assignments in the course. Please do not ask the instructor about alternative assignments. The course is based on Indigenous experiential learning practices. Note: See the end of the syllabus for tables that outline the tools and supplies you will need for the course assignments.