

Community Based Research in First Nations Studies: Indigenous and settler planning in Southern Ontario

Geography course 3001F (designated a field course)

FNS course 4023F

Fall 2014

Trip dates: Sept 14th – Sept 19th, 2014

Instructors

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1. Course Description

This course immerses students in historical ecology, restoration, invasive species, and planning in Indigenous contexts. Situated in Bkejwanong Territory (Walpole Island First Nation), students will use community-based methods to explore Anishinaabeg and non-Indigenous ecological restoration efforts while simultaneously assisting in community-based projects aimed at environmental and cultural restoration, specifically the restoration of Swan Lake Marsh, Prairie Dock Prairie, and Potawatomi Prairie and the removal of black locust, and other invasive plant species. Community-based methods embody Indigenous concepts of reciprocity. This means that students will not be the sole beneficiaries of knowledge gained in the community,

but will also be required to use their personal or collective gifts and talents to assist in ongoing efforts at the community level.

2. Learning Objectives

This course is designed to introduce students to the historic and contemporary realities experienced by Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples on Walpole Island and the neighbouring community of Chatham - Kent. The approach, grounded in community-based methods, offers students a unique experience in the social, environmental, and political contexts that have shaped the lands, waters, and habitats of the region.

In this course, students will be exposed to complex social and environmental histories and situations, all with the broad goals of enhancing their overall understanding of:

- the colonial basis of contemporary planning and policy-making
- decolonization in the planning process
- historical and contemporary interactions between people and diverse ecologies
- the ways in which Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples can work together toward common objectives.

3. Course Fees

Students are expected to have some extra money to contribute to personal and shared food during the trip.

4. Background

Bkejwanong Territory, which means “Where the Waters Divide,” is home to the Anishinaabeg of Walpole Island First Nation. Their current community is situated on six islands in the St. Clair River Delta, the largest freshwater delta in North America. The traditional homeland territory of Bkejwanong extends beyond the islands to Lake Huron, the Detroit River, Lake Erie, Michigan and Southern Ontario.

Despite centuries of colonization, the Anishinaabeg still consider the traditional territory their home, and as such they have inherent rights when it comes to the development of land and waters both on the delta, often referred to as the “Reserve” and in their traditional territory. Over the past two centuries, these rights have often been ignored, or worse, attempts have been made to remove these rights by the Canadian government, non-Indigenous industries and settler society.

The land and waters of the traditional territory, and for the context of this course, the municipality of Chatham - Kent, is home to extensive industrial, agricultural, and residential use by a majority non-Indigenous population. Much of the former environmental diversity has been reduced to small river and creek corridors, selected marshes that are utilized for hunting, and woodlots that have been preserved by individual landowners. In fact, Chatham-Kent has about only five percent of its original habitat remaining today. While much of Walpole Island remains biologically diverse, it too faces pressures from development and degradation.

“Planning” as a colonial based policy has largely focused on settling the land in a dominant Eurocentric agrarian framework. Successive generations of agricultural, industrial,

and town planning has ignored Indigenous presence and land-use planning and practices, while simultaneously disregarding and degrading bioregional ecosystems. As a result, one of the current challenges facing both the Indigenous and surrounding non-Indigenous communities is to maintain and restore the remnant and marginal Carolinian forest, oak savannah, tallgrass prairie, and aquatic ecosystems. Such restoration efforts and care of existing remnant habitats are understood to be key to Indigenous cultural survival.

While there are no easy solutions to the environmental challenges on Bkejwanong, steps toward decolonizing the planning process toward Indigenous centered approaches are needed both on the delta or “Reserve” and in the traditional territory.

5. Cultural awareness

Students are expected to have a basic understanding and respect of Anishinaabeg culture and the Carolinian ecozone. Appropriate ethical and cultural respect will be expected of all students throughout the duration of the course. Students are not expected to be cultural experts, and relevant cultural understandings will be shared with the students as part of the learning process. Specifically, the concept of reciprocity as it relates to the Anishinaabeg will be used as a pedagogical tool before, during, and after the community-based experience.

7. Preparation

Students will receive an orientation and logistical meeting one week prior to the trip. At this time students will be given course readings prior to the trip. Additional readings will be posted on OWL. Students are expected to bring the following items:

- Personal Flotation Device (life jacket).
- Personal medication, notification of potential health related issues, allergies, sensitivities, and emergency contact information / health card.
- Several sets of clothes, including clothes that will allow for outdoor travel and work.
- Rubber boots, gloves, hat, safety glasses, water bottles, cooler, insect repellent, sunscreen, rain gear.
- Money for meals and groceries.
- Sleeping bag, pillow, and hygienic accessories, including toilet paper, washcloths, and towels.
- Notepad, waterproof paper, and pens or pencils.
- Fan, Flashlight and extra batteries.

8. Course Assessment

Success in this course requires students to be open to new ideas while simultaneously contributing creative insights into the assignments and discussions.

Participation

30%

The key to successful participation in this course is approaching each new encounter and event as an active listener. Students are encouraged to take part in all activities throughout the week in a way that can fully illuminate their personal reflective assignment.

Pre-trip assignment 5%

This assignment is designed to acquaint students with the geography, culture, ecology, and history of the territory. At the pre-trip meeting, students will have the opportunity to choose one of three miniature assignment topics: route map assignment, settlement assignment, and nations assignment. This assignment is due when we load up the vans on Sunday.

- For the route map assignment, students can use google earth to plot the road and river routes to the **Cadotte cottage**, to the **north end of Walpole Island (Highbanks)**, and to **London**, and chart the distance it takes to travel to each location by boat and automobile. If students are keenly interested, they can take the extra step of determining the length of time it would take to travel to these locations by canoe.
- For the settlement assignment, students are asked to document the founding of five nearby Canadian settlements (no more than 50 kl distant). Write a paragraph for each settlement detailing when it was founded, by whom, and in what municipality does it sit.
- The Nations assignment will require students to identify each of the Indigenous nations that comprise Bkejwanong territory, the treaties they were signatory in the lower great lakes, at least one of the signatory chiefs, and the extent of the traditional territory.

Photographic Portfolio 10%

This assignment involves preparation of a digital folder with up to Ten (10) pictures taken by you on the trip with a digital camera. Pictures can be of nature, culture, people, adventure, geography, etc. and are to be delivered in full resolution to Drs Fehr and Pazner, and Clint Jacobs and Jared Macbeth of the Walpole Island Heritage Centre, by Friday October 3rd (two weeks after we get back). The up-to-10 pictures per person will be shown to the whole group at a post-trip gathering. You must accompany your collection with a text file (in softcopy PDF format) that contains a brief Title and Caption for each picture.

Personal Reflections 30%

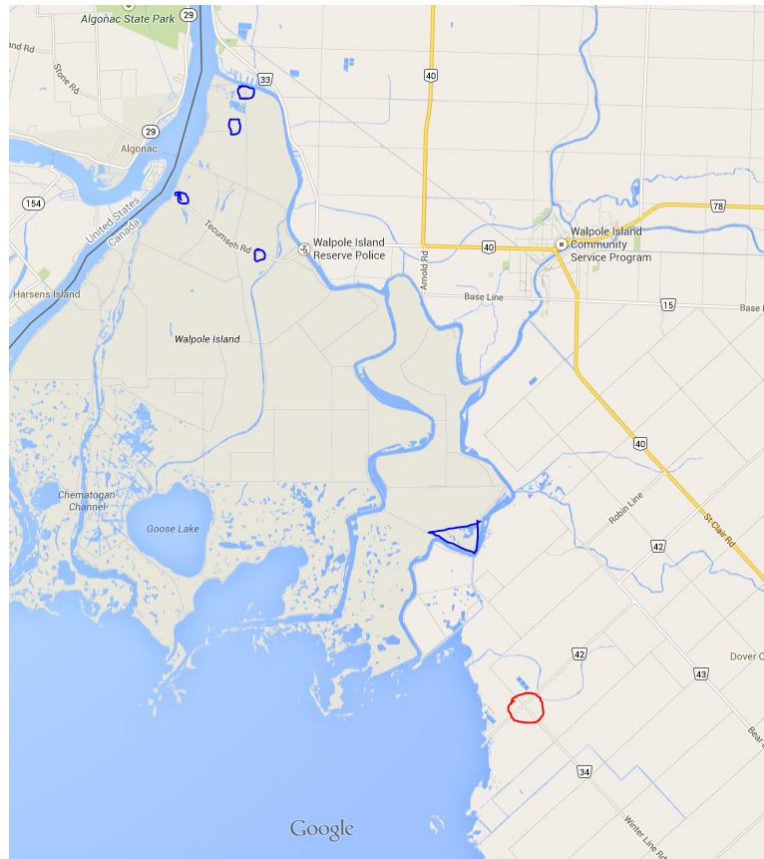
Each night students will reflect on the day's activities and record, on loose-leaf paper, their thoughts, questions, and insights into what they've learned. Subsequently, students will be given a separate question relating to course material and daily encounters that they are expected to reflect and write nightly essays on.

Personal or Group Project 25%

While we are down at Walpole Island and Dover Township, students will identify a small project that is realizable over the course of the week, or if not the week, by the end of the term. This project will be developed in consultation with professors Fehr and Pazner and with either Clint

Jacobs or Jared Macbeth of the Walpole Island Heritage Centre. The project must fall within the scope of the course philosophy and community needs identified by members of the Heritage Centre, and must focus on some aspect of restoration or cultural protocol, with an ethic of reciprocity. If the project is a paper, the terms of the paper and focus will be negotiated with the instructor.

9. Location information



We will be staying in Dover Township, at the hunting lodge of Greg and Jill Cadotte (<http://www.mitchellsbay.com/CadotteREX14.html>) (circled red on the map). The address is 27032 Winterline Rd., Mitchell's Bay, ON. Each day we will be visiting Walpole Island First Nation (primarily the areas marked in blue).

Course Text

Jay T. Johnson and Soren Larsen. *A Deeper Sense of Place: Stories and Journeys of Collaboration in Indigenous Research*. Oregon State University Press, 2013.

Additional readings will be posted on OWL.

ASSORTED ADMINISTRIVA

Cultural respect and mutual sharing

My experience working with the Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities on Walpole Island First Nation and their traditional territory (Wallaceburg and Dover Township) has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my life. I hope, through this community-based course, that you too can share this experience. The best way for this to happen is to be respectful of community members when they are sharing their time and knowledge with you. To me, this means being an active listener and being respectful of the views, opinions, and beliefs of other people. You will quickly learn that this respect is mutually shared, and when we are in Dover Township and Walpole Island the people will be genuinely interested and respectful of you.

Codes of Conduct

Included below is the *Code of Conduct for Students, Staff, and Faculty for the Department of Geography*. The *University of Western Ontario Code of Student Conduct* is available at: www.uwo.ca/univsec/board/code.pdf Please familiarize yourself with both of these documents should you have concerns about your own or somebody else's behaviours.

It is stating the obvious that perpetual tardiness, irresponsible or reckless behaviour, the illicit possession or consumption of drugs, or alcohol consumption are grounds for dismissal from the field trip and/or a failing grade in the course. If expelled during the field trip, you are responsible for paying your return fare, in addition to your pre-paid return train fare and all other pre-paid expenses. You are also exempt from the student levy funds subsidizing this field trip. By taking this section of the Geography 3001f / FNS 4023f course, you agree to these terms.

Safety

Safety is a shared responsibility. Although I will take every reasonable precaution concerning the safety of you as a participant in this field course—providing you with maps, my cell phone number, insisting that you travel in groups of two or more at all times—the potential hazards of being in wetlands, forests, and country roads where you might get lost make it imperative that everyone behaves responsibly in order to reduce the risk of accidents. Personal safety must be a personal responsibility. Complacency, inattention, lack of preparation and/or training will all increase risks to health and safety. Ultimately each individual must act in a reasonable manner in order to ensure their safety and the safety of others. Would those of you who have your First Aid Certificate please identify themselves to the group. (For more information, please see our departmental web address on 'Health and Safety': <http://geography.ssc.uwo.ca/health-safety/fieldwork.htm>).

Prerequisite checking - the student's responsibility

If applicable, a list of the prerequisites for the course and the following notation regarding the Senate regulation with respect to the student's responsibility for ensuring that course prerequisites have been completed successfully or special permission from the Dean obtained. Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Appeals

You are advised to read the course calendar to familiarize yourself with Western's regulations and procedures concerning appeals, grades, regulations, penalties and such at

<http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholoff.pdf>

Requests to have an assignment or examination re-evaluated must be submitted to me in writing within one week of receiving the graded assignment. In this written request for re-appraisal the specifics of what you would like re-visited and the justification for doing so will be clearly and concisely stated. Should you feel that your final grade in the course is biased, inaccurate or unfair, you do have the right to appeal your mark. Please refer to the *Western Calendar* prior to doing so (see web site above). In an attempt to avoid such time-consuming and stressful procedures for us both, be assured that each and every piece of work is graded carefully and thoroughly. I stand by the marks assigned. ***Be aware that marks may be raised-- as well as lowered--through an appeal process.***

Medical or Non-Medical Absence, Exemption and Tardiness

Students who have documented 'special needs' and/or official notifications of accommodation from the Dean's office —emailed directly to me—will be accommodated accordingly, including exemption of exams and assignments if circumstances warrant. For either medical or non-medical academic accommodation, such documentation must be submitted by the student directly to the appropriate Faculty Dean's office and not to the instructor. It will be the Dean's office that will determine if accommodation is warranted. In all other instances of absences, omissions and tardiness on your part, I respect your maturity: you are adults. If you choose to miss lectures, assignments and examinations you are most at liberty to do so. The consequences are made evident in this course outline. If you are late to class—or must leave early—please do so quietly with minimal disturbance to your peers. Thanks.

For UWO Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness and a downloadable SMC see:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf

Downloadable Student Medical Certificate (SMC):

<https://studentservices.uwo.ca> under the Medical Documentation heading

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is stealing: it is unacceptable, and those who tempt fate will be persecuted to the fullest extent allowed under the university's regulations. Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following web site:

<http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholoff.pdf> . Please avoid this experience and do your own work. Be aware that all required papers *may* be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

Extensions & Late Submissions

All requests for extensions on essay deadlines must be made in writing to me, Dr. Hopkins, at least two weeks before the essay is due. I do not ask for an explanation or reason, simply the revised due date you wish. You may have up to three days beyond the initial due date. Essays submitted beyond the new due date will be penalized as per the course penalty (10% per day). Never slip assignments under my door. Submit late assignments in the 'drop box' outside the main geography office.

Electronic Devices

Never record digitally (AV) or otherwise any part of my class lectures or labs without my prior and specific permission or the permission of a guest speaker. Audio and video recording is not

permitted at the school or health centre. Note taking is encouraged when I am speaking, but this might not be acceptable if an Elder is speaking, it is advisable to ask first.

Accessibility

The University of Western Ontario is committed to achieving barrier free accessibility for persons studying at Western. Please contact the course instructor if you require material in an alternate format or if you require any other arrangements to make this course more accessible to you. You may also wish to contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at 661-2111 x 82147 for any specific question regarding an accommodation.

Support Services

Registrarial Services: <http://www3.registrar.uwo.ca/index.cfm>

Student Development Services: <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>

Mental Health: If you or someone you know is experiencing distress, there are several resources here at Western to assist you. Please visit the site below for more information on mental health resources: <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/>.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR STUDENTS, STAFF, AND FACULTY FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY

Affiliation with the Department of Geography presumes mutual respect among students, staff, teaching assistants, and faculty. A positive atmosphere of professionalism and collegiality is essential for everyone to perform to the best of his or her abilities. This requires respect for the opinions and questions of others and behaviour that is, at all times, courteous, and conducive to creating a pleasant and productive environment for learning and working.

As members of a Department of Geography, we are expected to show special respect for our environment, being individually responsible for promoting a clean and safe work environment within the facilities of the Department and the Social Science Centre, including classrooms, laboratories, the Map Library, offices, hallways, washrooms, exterior grounds, and the facilities and vehicles used in field courses and field trips.

It is inevitable that misunderstandings will occur from time to time. However, it is in everyone's interest to try and resolve problems in a non-confrontational manner. Threatening, violent, or abusive behaviour, harassment (including sexual and racial harassment), rudeness (in person, in writing, or on the telephone), and abuse of authority, for whatever reasons, corrode good working and learning conditions.

Incidents that cannot be resolved amicably may be reported to the Chair of the Department (661-3653). The Chair will consider appropriate actions for resolving the problem, usually after consultation with the parties involved. If required, contact with university services (e.g., Police, Equity) or civil authorities will be invoked.

Student Use of University Facilities and Classroom Decorum:

Students are expected to comply with the authority of University staff and faculty on all matters relating to access to facilities (offices, classrooms, laboratories, and Map Library) and to use of equipment and resources.

Students are expected to attend all lectures and laboratory sessions regularly and punctually.

Instructors are responsible for maintaining an appropriate academic atmosphere in all class activities; students are expected to cooperate in this effort. Actions that impede instruction deter the ability of students to learn, or show disrespect for instructors and fellow students, will not be condoned in Geography classrooms and labs. Such actions include reading during lectures, disturbing consumption of food or drink, use of walkmans and radios, and disruptive

conversation. Serious disrespect for classroom decorum should be reported to the instructor and, if required, to the Chair of the Geography Department (SSC 2429, Telephone 661-3653).

Students are expected to adhere to University standards of academic honesty, as outlined under "Scholastic Offences" in the Western Calendar. Unacceptable practices include cheating, impersonation, plagiarism, misrepresentation of research, falsification of documents, obstructing the academic activities of another, aiding or abetting academic misconduct, and abuse of confidentiality. In addition to incurring penalties, as outlined in the Calendar, some academic offences may fall under the Criminal Code of Canada.

Approved on behalf of Faculty, Staff, and Students by the Council of the Department of Geography on 4 March 1994.