**Course syllabus: Canadian Aboriginal Literature**

**Course Description:**

The course discusses various aspects of Canadian Aboriginal culture as one of the constitutive elements of the country’s historical, as well as current realities. In each session we will analyze a short theoretical text that contributes to the debate concerning indigeneity and Aboriginal culture in Canada in an important and pertinent manner.The main focus, however, will be on literary texts representative of the diversity of the contemporary literary production by Aboriginal authors.

Requirements for successful completion of a course:

Regular attendance

Active class participation

Knowledge of the assigned readings, preparation for their analysis in class

Final research paper - students will choose the topic according to their preferences, work on it independently and submit it during the examination period (when needed, they will discuss their work with the instructor and seek advice). The paper can address any of the subject areas as indicated in the syllabus, and demonstrate the argument on any relevant literary text of the author’s choice. Also, essays should not focus on mere descriptions of the chosen examples, but instead should reflect the problems in context, and actively support their arguments by the use of secondary sources.

**Syllabus:**

**Week 1:**

Introduction into the themes and objectives of the course, discussion

**Week 2:**

**Traditional Aboriginal Orature**

(Olive Patricia Dickason: “Toward a Larger View of Canada’s History: The Native Factor”)

**Week 3:**

**Myths of Origin and Creation**

(Margot Astrov: “The Power of the Word:” from: *Literature of the American Indian*)

**Week 4:**

**The Living Landscapes of Myth: The North**

Stories of Sedna

(Harold Seidelman and James Turner: “Inuit Stories:” from: *The Inuit Imagination*)

**Week 5:  
Into Our Times: Contemporary Aboriginal Literature in Canada**

Maria Campbell: *Halfbreed*

(Jeanette Armstrong: “The Disempowerment of First Nations American Native Peoples and Empowerment Through Their Writing”)

**Week 6:  
Language and Modern Retellings of (Hi)story**

Thomas King: *Medicine River*

(Thomas King: “Godzilla vs. Post-Colonial”)

**Week 7:**

**Gender and Ethnicity in the Aboriginal Context**

Beatrice Mosionier Culleton: *In Search of April Raintree*

(Cora Voyageur: “Contemporary Indian Women”)

**Week 8:**

**In and Out of the Rez: Canadian Aboriginal Theatre**

Tomson Highway: *The Rez Sisters*

(Drew Hayden Taylor: “Alive and Well: Native Theatre in Canada”)

**Week 9:**

**Indians and Us**

Emma Lee Warrior: “Compatriots”

# (Katrin Sieg: “Winnetou’s Grandchildren: Indian Identification, Ethnic Expertise, White Embodiment” from: *Ethnic Drag: Performing Race, Nation, Sexuality in West Germany*)

**Week 10:**

**Murdered and Missing: Staging Violence Against Women**

Marie Clements: *Unnatural and Accidental Women*

(Erin Wunker: “The. Women. The Subject(s) of the *Unnatural and Accidental Women* and *Unnatural and Accidental*”)

**Week 11:**

**Tradition and (Post)Modernity**

Thomas King: “The One About Coyote Going West”

(Joseph Bruchac: “The Continuing Circle: Native American Storytelling Past and Present”)

**Week 12:**

**Re-entering the Ojibway Circle**

Rachel A. Qitsualik: “Skraeling”

Renate Eigenbrod: “Moving Between Cultures, Languages and Literacies” from: *Traveling Knowledges: Positioning the Im/Migrant Reader of Aboriginal Literatures in Canada*

**Week 13:**

Credit week