

MPA 860: Course Breakdown:

Course Overview

As Canada's "two founding nations" myth is slowly being exposed and the contributions of Indigenous peoples are being recognized, Canada's public policy framework which ostensibly respects Indigenous peoples is crumbling. Canadians are learning that their history is rife with mass human rights violations, broken treaties and promises, and policy foundations best summed up by Duncan Campbell Scott when he said "I want to get rid of the Indian problem.... Our objective is to continue until there is not a single Indian in Canada that has not been absorbed into the body politic and there is no Indian question..."

Yet, the "Indian Question" is alive and well. It is difficult to imagine any major development project, new legislation or major public policy happening in Canada that does not involve Indigenous peoples. Internationally, Canada's reputation has suffered because of its handling of Indigenous issues.

Canada is the first, "First World" country to set up a Truth and Reconciliation Commission to examine one of the darkest chapters of its history, the Indian Residential School Era. The Commission recently released its Final Report and the federal government has said it will implement all ninety four recommendations. The challenge for policy makers, legislators and Indigenous leaders is to act in a manner consistent with the principles and values inherent in the word Reconciliation. Through readings, class discussions and guest speakers, students will have the opportunity to better understand why we are in an Era of Reconciliation and explore public policy options regarding the Indigenous agenda.

Course objectives and assignments

- To equip future public policy leaders with an understanding of the current state of Indigenous public policy and how it has evolved
- To challenge future public policy leaders to consider what a public policy paradigm based on Reconciliation looks like
- To articulate both in writing and orally and to work in and with other groups to develop policy or legislative change reflective of Reconciliation.

Assignments and Marking Structure:

| Assignment | Course Weight (%) | Due Date |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|----------|
| Reflection Paper | 10 | May 12 |
| Mid-Term Paper | 20 | June 1 |
| Participation | 20 | Ongoing |
| Consensus-Building Exercise | 25 | In Class |

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| Final Paper | 25 | June 15 |
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- 1) A reflection paper on something you read or heard assigned during lecture in class. The paper should be no more than 250 words. 10%
- 2) Mid-term paper. You will be given three questions of which you are to answer ONE. You are expected to bring in a hard copy of this exam into the beginning of class on June 1. 750 words, 20%
- 3) Participation. Good public policy development happens through the exchange of ideas; as such participation in class discussions is important and valued. Students are expected to participate actively in class discussions and come to class prepared with critical perspectives on the assigned readings and topics. 20%
- 4) Consensus Building Exercise. Members of the class will be assigned roles reflecting various opinions on reconciliation. The objective will be to use the skills and knowledge you have developed to try and reach a consensus on how to resolve the issue. You will be scored on your participation in the exercise and on your group presentation. 25% (5% of which will be peer input)
- 5) Final Paper- You may choose a policy issue you would like to explore in light of reconciliation. Using best practices and knowledge of reconciliation and good governance you will prepare a paper to recommend how to deal with the issue effectively. This paper should be 1200 words in length. APA citation. June 15. 25%

Grading: All papers will be graded on style, clarity and the compelling nature of your thesis. Your ability to draw on and integrate the many sources used in class as well as others you may find during your research will improve your grade. Part of your ability to be effective in the world of public policy is to persuade others that your point of view is worthy of consideration. Likewise I will be looking for persuasive arguments based on sound research and analysis in assigning grades.

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