

The University of British Columbia
Department of Central, Eastern, and Northern European Studies

CENS 203 (3): Arctic Art and Activism

Acknowledgement

UBC's Point Grey Campus is located on the traditional, ancestral, occupied, and unceded territory of the x^wməθk^wəyəm (Musqueam) people. I acknowledge the land rights of the Musqueam people, who for millennia have passed their culture, history, and traditions from one generation to the next on this site. In this course, we pay respect to the Musqueam people by centering the Indigenous perspectives from which the course content emerges.

Course Information

Course Title	Course Code Number	Credit Value
Arctic Art and Activism	CENS 203	3 Credits

Meeting Times and Place

CENS 203	Monday, Wednesday	12:30 – 14:00	Buchanan D304
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Course Instructor	Contact Details	Office	Office Hours
Tim Frandy	tim.frandy@ubc.ca	Buchanan Tower 901	Mon 14:00 – 15:00 and by appointment

Calendar Description

Examination of contemporary political and social conflicts in the arctic and circumpolar north, focus on ways Indigenous people have used art, performance, and activism as a tool for resistance and decolonization.

Credit will be granted for only one of CENS 203 or NORD 341.

Prerequisites and Co-requisites

No prerequisites or co-requisites

Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, you will be able to:

- LO1:** Describe the diverse Indigenous cultures of the Arctic and circumpolar region, and the ways their experiences connect to Indigenous peoples in British Columbia.
- LO2:** Demonstrate a competent knowledge of the environmental, social, and political challenges that Indigenous people face in the Arctic, and the ways Indigenous people have responded to them and resisted them through artistic expression.
- LO3:** Identify the ways the colonization reinvents itself in different social and political moments, and the ways contemporary Indigenous artists draw upon traditional culture and multicultural influences to create complex political and artistic visions.
- LO4:** Describe and discuss the ways art operates as both a tool and a discourse within localized and transnational social movements.
- LO5:** Describe, discuss, and analyze Indigenous art from different critical perspectives, using both scholarly and primary source materials.

Course Overview

CENS 203 looks at Indigenous political art in the circumpolar region, focusing largely on the arts from Sápmi, Inuit Nunangat, and Siberia (including Khanty, Mansi, Evenk, Udegeh artists). The course looks at the ways both traditional and contemporary arts serve as a political and social tool: to promote awareness, to cultivate community, to shape discourse, and to leverage social power. The course is thematically arranged, looking at the shared experiences Indigenous peoples have with colonization, resistance, and decolonization today.

Course Format

CENS 203 is a discussion course, focused on close readings of Indigenous literature, film, music, and digital media, with additional contextual information supplemented through lectures. Course materials (all in English) will be presented in class and online. In-class activities will include discussion, lectures, and small group work.

Learning Materials

One book is required for purchase:

Korneliusson, Niviaq. *Last Night in Nuuk*. Nuuk: Milik. The book is available on [Amazon](#), [iBooks](#), and [Google Books](#).

All other required readings and materials (see Course Reading List below) are posted on our course Canvas site ([canvas.ubc.ca](#)).

Assessment of Learning

Class Participation	15%
Midterm exam 1	25%
Comparative Artist Profile Essay	30%
Final examination	30%

90-100% = A+	76-79% = B+	64-67% = C+	50-54% = D
85-89% = A	72-75% = B	60-63% = C	00-49% = F

80-84% = A- 68-71% = B- 55-59% = C-

Class Participation (15%) (LO1, LO2, LO3, LO4)

The success of this course depends on in-class discussion of readings. For that reason, it's essential that all students come prepared for discussion, with course materials read in advance of class. Students will be assessed holistically on their presence, preparedness, and willingness to engage with course materials during in-class discussion and activities. The instructor reserves the right—in the event that discussions are unproductive because of lack of preparation—to require students to do reading journals to earn their participation grade for the course. In the event you cannot attend class, please send me an email *in advance of class* as a courtesy, so I can plan accordingly (some activities might not work if there are too few students attending class).

Midterm Exam 1 (25%) (LO1, LO2, LO3, LO4)

The first midterm exam is a writing-based exam, that explores topics from the first half of the course, specifically land-use issues and confronting colonization. It will be taken on the Canvas site. The exam is open book, and questions will be provided at least one week in advance of the exam on a Midterm Exam Study Guide. The exam must be completed by Friday, February 17, 2023.

Comparative Artist Profile Essay (30%) (LO1, LO2, LO3, LO4, LO5)

With this 5-6 page double-spaced essay, I ask you profile two Indigenous artists (one from an Arctic Indigenous people, and one local to British Columbia or the Pacific Northwest) whose work you'd like to become more familiar. Research their biographical information online, what they say about their own art, and how others regard it. Compare and contrast the statements that these artists make through their art, how it engages with political struggles, and how it has impacted communities. Papers should include a short bibliography of sources used in creating these profiles. Papers are due by Friday, March 17, 2023.

Final Examination (30%) (LO1, LO2, LO3, LO4, LO5)

The final exam is a writing-based exam, that explores topics from the last half of the course. It will be taken on the Canvas site. The exam is open book, and questions will be provided at least one week in advance of the exam on an Exam Study Guide. The exam must be completed during the final exam period (tbd).

All assignments are assessed on 1) command of content and concepts developed in the course; 2) the quality of humanistic analysis and argument presented in the assignment; 3) the efficacy of communication in the finished product.

Overview of Course Schedule

Week	Date	Topic	Assignments
1	1/9, 1/11	Introduction to the Arctic	
2	1/16, 1/18	Land I (Occupancy; Industry)	
3	1/23, 1/25	Land II (Water & Earth; Fishing & Hunting)	
4	1/30, 2/1	Confronting Colonialism I (Church & School)	
5	2/6, 2/8	Confronting Colonialism II (Trauma)	
6	2/13, 2/15	Confronting Colonialism III (Resistance)	Midterm Exam 1 due Feb. 17
	2/20, 2/22	Midterm Break	
7	2/27, 3/1	Material Indigeneity: Dress & Art	
8	3/6, 3/8	Queering Indigeneity	
9	3/13, 3/15	Awakening the Spirits: Religious Revitalization	Comparative Essay
10	3/20, 3/22	Creating the Future out of the Past: New Media	
11	3/27, 3/29	Cultural Sustainability: Public Humanities	
12	4/3, 4/5	Cultural Hybridization	
13	4/10, 4/12	Oral Presentations	
Finals	4/17-4/28	Final Examination	tbd

University and Course Policies

Feel free to discuss any of these with me!

UBC provides resources to support student learning and to maintain healthy lifestyles but recognizes that sometimes crises arise and so there are additional resources to access including those for survivors of sexual violence. UBC values respect for the person and ideas of all members of the academic community. Harassment and discrimination are not tolerated nor is suppression of academic freedom. UBC provides appropriate accommodation for students with disabilities and for religious observances. UBC values academic honesty and students are expected to acknowledge the ideas generated by others and to uphold the highest academic standards in all of their actions.

Details of the policies and how to access support are available on [the UBC Senate website](#).

Academic Concessions

Under UBC's academic concession policy (<https://www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/index.cfm?tree=3,329,0,0>), students seeking academic concession for any of three reasons: conflicting responsibilities; medical circumstances; and compassionate grounds, should do the following.

If you miss marked coursework for the first time (assignment, exam, presentation, participation in class) and the course is still in-progress, speak with me immediately to find a solution for your missed coursework.

If you are an Arts student and this is not the first time you have requested concession or classes are over, fill out Arts Academic Advising's [online academic concession form](#)

<https://students.air.arts.ubc.ca/academic-concession-form/> immediately, so that an advisor can evaluate your concession case.

If you are a student in a different Faculty and this is not the first time you have requested concession or classes are over, please consult [your Faculty's webpage on academic concession](#), and then contact me where appropriate.

Academic Integrity

The academic enterprise is founded on honesty, civility, and integrity. As members of this enterprise, all students are expected to know, understand, and follow the codes of conduct regarding academic integrity. At the most basic level, this means submitting only original work done by you and acknowledging all sources of information or ideas and attributing them to others as required. This also means you should not cheat, copy, or mislead others about what is your work. Violations of academic integrity (i.e., misconduct) lead to the breakdown of the academic enterprise, and therefore serious consequences arise and harsh sanctions are imposed. For example, incidences of plagiarism or cheating may result in a mark of zero on the assignment or exam and more serious consequences may apply when the matter is referred to the Office of the Dean. Careful records are kept in order to monitor and prevent recurrences. A more detailed description of academic integrity, including the University's policies and procedures, may be found in the [UBC Calendar: Student Conduct and Discipline](#).

Students might additionally consult the Purdue Writing Lab for general information on plagiarism, information on safe practices to avoid plagiarism and more: https://owl.purdue.edu/avoiding_plagiarism/index.html

Academic Accommodation

Academic accommodations help students with a disability or ongoing medical condition overcome challenges that may affect their academic success. Students requiring academic accommodations must

register with the [Centre for Accessibility](#). The Centre will determine that student's eligibility for accommodations in accordance with [Policy LR7: Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#). Academic accommodations are not determined by your instructors, and instructors should not ask you about the nature of your disability or ongoing medical condition, or request copies of your disability documentation. However, your instructor may consult with the Centre for Accessibility should the accommodations affect the essential learning outcomes of a course.

Instructor-specific Policies of Note:

Late Work

It is important that you stay on task and meet weekly deadlines... students get into trouble when they fall behind. But sometimes life gets in the way of our ability to meet deadlines. If you are having problems meeting deadlines (particularly for major assignments), please communicate with me as soon as possible, and we can try to come up with a solution. Please let me know before you're going to miss a deadline, rather than afterwards, since that's really the much more polite thing to do.

Missing Class

Though I want you all in class, there are all kinds of reasons to miss class. If you're feeling sick, you should stay home. If you have personal situations arise (family situations, work commitments, other responsibilities, etc), then you should attend to those. If you really need a mental health day, maybe you should take one. The only thing I ask is that you send me an email and let me know before class, so I can adjust my plan for the day.

There's no direct penalty for missing class, although missing class will likely have some inevitable impact on your graded work. Regardless, I encourage you to be in touch if you're going to be missing class, and we can work together to make sure it's minimally impactful.

Early Alert

We participate in the Early Alert Program which helps me support students who are facing difficulties that are interfering with school. If you are feeling stressed, please notify the TA or the instructor and indicate that you would like assistance. While we are not trained to help with personal problems, we can get you help from people who are. Any information that they receive from you or us is strictly confidential and is in the interest of your academic success and wellbeing. For more information, please visit [EarlyAlert](#).