

## The Truth and Reconciliation Commission

(History 399/ Theology 399)

The King's University College  
9125 – 50 Street  
Edmonton

Winter 2014

Wednesday 6:30-9:20pm, unless otherwise noted  
All classes take place in Room N206 unless otherwise noted

**The public is welcome to attend any and all evenings at no cost**

Facilitators:

Roy Berkenbosch ([roy.berkenbosch@kingsu.ca](mailto:roy.berkenbosch@kingsu.ca))

780 465 3500 ext. 8070

William Van Arragon ([william.vanarragon@kingsu.ca](mailto:william.vanarragon@kingsu.ca))

780 465 3500 ext. 8074

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This is a special course that examines the history and consequences of the Indian Residential schools and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Presentations will be made primarily by members of the aboriginal community who have direct experience of residential schools and are engaged in the work of reconciliation and healing. It is intended to provide context for the TRC's final National Event, to be held in Edmonton on March 27-30, 2014.

The following includes a schedule of presentations and other events, a reading list, and the assignment guidelines for students who are taking this course for university credit.

We are profoundly grateful to our guest presenters, without whom this course would not be possible.

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## **Schedule of Presenters and Topics (subject to change as necessary)**

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January 8: Introduction to the Course

**Roy Berkenbosch** and **Will Van Arragon**: The King's University College

January 15: The Blanket Exercise

**Harold Roscher**: Chaplain and Director, Edmonton Native Healing Centre  
The Buffalo Moon Project

January 22: "Gently Whispering the Circle Back"—Viewing and Discussion

**Beth Wishart MacKenzie**: Producer/Director

January 29: The Role of the Churches

**Cecile Fausak** and **Travis Enright**

Cecile Fausak is the United Church liaison minister for the TRC.

Reverend Canon Travis Enright is Canon Missioner at All Saints Cathedral in Edmonton.

February 5: The Role of the State

**Janice Makokis**: Instructor and Treaty Education Coordinator, Blue Quills First Nations College

\*\*February 12: No Public Class [Review class for enrolled students]\*\*

\*\*February 19: NO CLASS [King's Reading Week]\*\*

February 26: Residential School Experiences

**Gordon Burnstick**, Health Support Worker, Health Canada

March 5: Health and Social Impacts

**Brenda Reynolds** and **Dave Ward**

Brenda Reynolds is Regional Coordinator for the Indian Residential Schools Resolution Health Support Program.

Dave Ward is Director of Aboriginal relations with Homeward Trust.

March 12: Justice and the Settlement Agreement

**Catherine Coughlan**: Counsel, Department of Justice Canada

March 19: The Truth and Reconciliation Commission

**Wilton Littlechild**: Commissioner, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission [To be confirmed]

\*\*March 26: NO CLASS (TRC National Event in Edmonton, March 27-30; Interdisciplinary Studies Conference, March 26-27.)

April 2: Reflecting on the National Event – Discussion and Debriefing

Led by **Roy Berkenbosch** and **Will Van Arragon**

April 9: Reflecting on Reconciliation [Final Public Lecture]

**Terry LeBlanc:** Executive Director, My People International; Founder and Chair, North American Institute for Indigenous Theological Studies

\*\*April 16: No Public Class [Final review class for enrolled students]

## **Selected Resources**

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### **Truth and Reconciliation Commission: Interim Report (February 2012):**

[http://www.attendancemarketing.com/~attmk/TRC\\_id/Interim\\_report\\_English\\_electronic\\_copy.pdf](http://www.attendancemarketing.com/~attmk/TRC_id/Interim_report_English_electronic_copy.pdf)

### **Important Historical Documents:**

1. Royal Proclamation of 1763
2. *An Act to Encourage the Gradual Civilization of Indian Tribes, 1857*
3. *Indian Act, 1876*
4. *Report on Industrial Schools for Indians and Half-Breeds, 1879*
5. Dr. P. H. Bryce, *The Story of a National Crime, 1922*
6. White Paper, 1969
7. The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples [RCAP] Final Report, 1996
8. Text of Prime Minister Harper's Apology on behalf of Canadians for the Indian Residential School System, 11 June 2008
9. United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, 2008

### **Suggested Books:**

(Students who are taking this course for credit are required to read and review one of these books)

Jeremy Bergen, *Ecclesial Repentance: The Churches Confront Their Sinful Pasts* (T & T Clark, 2011)

Roland Chrisjohn and Sherri Young, with Michael Maraun, *The Circle Game: Shadows and Substance in the Indian Residential School Experience in Canada* (Theytus Books, 1997)

Tomson Highway, *Kiss of the Fur Queen* (Doubleday Canada, 1998)

Steve Heinrichs, editor., *Buffalo Shout, Salmon Cry: Conversations on Creation, Land Justice, and Life Together* (Herald Press, 2013)

Rita Joe, *Song of Rita Joe: Autobiography of a Mi'kmaq Poet* (University of Nebraska Press, 1996)

Thomas King, *The Inconvenient Indian: A Curious Account of Native People in North America* (Random House, 2012).

J. S. Miller, *Shingwauk's Vision: A History of Native Residential Schools* (University of Toronto Press, 1996)

John Milloy, *A National Crime: The Canadian Government and the Residential School System, 1879 to 1986* (University of Manitoba Press, 1999)

Ronald Niezen, *Truth & Indignation: Canada's Truth and Residential Commission on Indian Residential Schools* (University of Toronto Press, 2013)

Paulette Regan, *Unsettling the Settler Within: Indian Residential Schools, Truth Telling, and Reconciliation in Canada* (University of British Columbia Press, 2010)

Shelagh Rogers, Mike DeGagne, Jonathan Dewar, Glen Lowry, eds., *Speaking My Truth: Reflections on Reconciliation & Residential Schools* (Aboriginal Healing Foundation, 2012) [See <http://www.ahf.ca/publications> for many more publications from the Aboriginal Healing Foundation.]

Rupert Ross, *Returning to the Teachings: Exploring Aboriginal Justice* (Penguin Canada, 2006 [1996])

Richard Wagamese, *Indian Horse* (Douglas & McIntyre, 2012)

### **Additional Resources**

Micah Centre—TRC Resources

<http://micahcentre.ca/truth-and-reconciliation-commission/>

Legacy of Hope Foundation

[www.legacyofhope.ca](http://www.legacyofhope.ca)

Truth and Reconciliation Commission

[www.trc.ca](http://www.trc.ca)

Where are the Children?

[www.wherethechildren.ca](http://www.wherethechildren.ca)

## Course Assignments (required for students taking this course for credit)

### 1. Weekly Journal (30% of final grade)

To help you process the course material, you will be responsible for writing a weekly journal. After each class meeting you should take some time to write down your thoughts and reflections about what you heard and saw. These journal entries should be at least 400-500 words in length (you may write more if you wish). Your entries may be informal but they also should be analytical and interpretive (and well written!); they should not merely summarize the content of that day's activities. On occasion we may also assign "mandatory" topics to consider in your journal. Finally, you should conclude each journal entry with a discussion question that could be used in the following class. We will use these entries as a barometer of your thinking during the course; they will help us "listen" as we learn together.

These journal entries are due **each week in class**. (The first one will be due on January 15; the last one will be due April 16. You are not required to submit a journal entry on weeks we do not meet.)

### 2. Museum Review (15% of final grade)

Your task in this assignment is a self-directed excursion to Edmonton's Royal Alberta Museum to visit the Syncrude Gallery of Aboriginal Culture. You should feel free to visit the museum at a time/date convenient to you, so long as you do so in time to submit an excellent review on the due date. Your task is to write a critical review of the exhibit: Spend a few hours in the exhibit and then reflect in an essay about your thoughts and impressions. You might consider the following questions: How is the exhibit organized? How does it tell the history of Aboriginal cultures? What artifacts are particularly interesting or evocative? What sorts of voices and stories do you hear? How does the gallery tell stories of survival, healing, and hope? How did you feel during your visit? What did you learn?

Your essay should be at least 1000 words in length and should be of exceptional literary quality. It is due in class on **Wednesday, February 5**.

### 3. Book Review (20% of final grade)

You should read widely from the bibliography and resources listed above. We will not necessarily discuss these materials in class but they will nevertheless provide context from which you can more effectively engage our guest speakers. Some of our guests may also ask you to do some additional reading, not listed in the outline, in advance of their presentations.

In addition, you must choose **one book** from the bibliography and write an analytical response on it. Some of the books are novels, others are histories or collections of essays and memoirs; your written response should be appropriate to the genre.

Your review should be at least 1500 words in length and should (again) be of exceptional literary quality. It is due in class on **Wednesday, March 12.**

4. Final Paper (25% of final grade)

In lieu of a final exam, you will write a synthetic reflective paper in which you think deeply about the presentations, readings, and discussions, as well as the TRC National Event itself, of course. Your paper will be about 2500 words in length. More specific instructions will be distributed later in the term.

5. Hospitality (10% of final grade)

“Hospitality” implies more than mere attendance, although your weekly attendance and engaged participation are essential requirements, and you will be assessed for your contributions in class. Since most of the content in this course will be offered by guest presenters, some of whom will speak from places of considerable vulnerability, you are more than students; you are also hosts. Please be generous with your attention and honour our guests with questions and discussion. You should also plan on attending as much of the TRC’s National Event as possible.

Please note: Two class meetings are reserved for enrolled students; the dates for these meetings are **February 19** and **April 16.**

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If you have questions about any of these assignments, **please** consult your helpful course facilitators.