

PHIL 102

Place and Power

Syllabus
W2, Spring 2025

This course takes place on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the x^wməθk^wəyəm (Musqueam) People.

All sections of PHIL 102 address basic problems and methods of philosophy. This section covers topics in ethics, epistemology, political philosophy, and aesthetics relating to local Indigenous societies in the context of settler colonialism. The course will adopt a primary focus on Musqueam, extending its view outwards to Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh, as well as to the rest of BC and beyond. The principal areas addressed are:

- The philosophy of art and storytelling, with emphases on:
 - Relationships between art and power,
 - Cultural appropriation,
 - Stereotyping and reclamation, and
 - Story-based knowledge;
- Epistemologies of knowledge and ignorance;
- Environmental ethics; and
- Philosophies of power and oppression, in particular as applied to:
 - the marginalization of Indigenous peoples under Canadian colonialism,
 - anti-Indigenous structural racism in North American contexts, and
 - UBC's past and present position within the colonial power structure.

Learning objectives

1. Acquire a valuable toolkit of conceptual resources, including elements from Indigenous and European traditions of thought;
2. Study works by contemporary Indigenous philosophers, including local writers and artists;
3. Study core philosophical texts from the Western philosophical canon and learn how to place them in their colonial context, with reference to local cases of land appropriation and their legal, ethical, and political significance;
4. Develop basic literacy with regard to the local Indigenous nations;
5. Develop skills for effectively and respectfully discussing philosophical issues relating to Indigeneity and settler colonialism; and
6. Be prepared for future undergraduate study in philosophy through development of such core skills as essay writing and argumentation.

Materials

There is no textbook for this course. All required materials are available online, at no cost to students. Canvas and UBC library login access are required to access materials.

Instructor

Carrie Jenkins, carrie.jenkins@ubc.ca, they/she

Teaching Assistant

TBA

Email policy

Please put "PHIL 102" in the subject line. I aim to reply to student emails within two working days (not including weekends and holidays) of receipt. Please note that emails sent outside of working hours (i.e. after 5pm or before 9am PST) aren't received until the next working day.

Office hours

Wednesday and Friday, 10-11am in [Carrie's Zoom office](#)

If you can't make these times, or prefer an in-person meeting, contact [Carrie](#) for an appointment.

Canvas

Link TBA

Top Hat

Go to <https://tophat.com/>

Click on *Login* if you have an existing account or Sign-up > Student sign-up

Click on the *Search by School* link at the bottom

Enter University of British Columbia

When you are met with the join code field, enter code **[TBA]**

Classes

This course is fully in-person: regular attendance is required

See Canvas for time and location and info

Assessment

- **Participation: 20%**
 - Participate in class through TopHat to earn this part of your grade
- **Short assignments: 20%**
 - Length: approx. 200 words each
 - Submit via Canvas
 - Due: **TBA**
- **Mid-term essay: 30%**
 - Rubric provided on Canvas
 - Due: **TBA**
- **Exam: 30%**
 - Rubric provided on Canvas
 - Date and time: **TBA**

If you can't do the work on time

I get it. I am happy to grant extensions where needed; just ask. However, work submitted late *without* an extension cannot be accepted, unless exceptional circumstances made it impossible to request an extension in advance of the deadline. This policy is in place to ensure that I and the course TA can manage our workloads and grade everyone's work fairly.

Note on academic integrity

Plagiarism, which is intellectual theft, occurs where an individual submits or presents the oral or written work of another person as his or her own. Scholarship quite properly rests upon examining and referring to the thoughts and writings of others. However, when another person's words (i.e. phrases, sentences, or paragraphs), ideas, or entire works are used, the author must be acknowledged in the text, in footnotes, in endnotes, or in another accepted form of academic citation. Where direct quotations are made, they must be clearly delineated (for example, within quotation marks or separately indented). Failure to provide proper attribution is plagiarism because it represents someone else's work as one's own. Plagiarism should not occur in submitted drafts or final works. A student who seeks assistance from a tutor or other scholastic aids must ensure that the work submitted is the student's own. Students are responsible for ensuring that any work submitted does not constitute plagiarism. Students who are in any doubt as to what constitutes plagiarism should consult their instructor before handing in any assignments. A link about Academic misconduct is below:

<http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/Vancouver/index.cfm?tree=3,54,111,959>

Syllabus statement about UBC's values and policies

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 and cultural 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 [here](#).

Note on atmosphere

The topics of this course will include sensitive and challenging material for many people. While we may be examining and questioning beliefs, including some deeply-held ones, everyone in the course—instructor, TA, and students—has a shared responsibility to ensure that we do so with care and respect, ensuring that our environment is supportive and conducive to learning. No offensive jokes or comments, or other harmful behaviors with respect to ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, or anything else, will be acceptable. The aim of our discussions is not to “win” arguments or to prove how smart we are, but to learn collaboratively with others.

DATES TBA	TOPICS	MATERIALS
	Being here Short assignment 1: Decolonial autobiography	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Origin of the Name Musqueam <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Transcript of the above video - Musqueam Through Time Part I - Musqueam Through Time Part II - Out of the Ashes (Señákw development)
	Texts and their contexts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - First Meditation from <i>Meditations on First Philosophy</i> by René Descartes - Chapter 5 (“Of Property”) of Second Treatise of Government by John Locke - Chapter 1 of <i>Indigenizing Philosophy Through the Land</i> by Brian Burkhart - The Doctrine of Discovery explained
	Origins and stories Short assignment 2: Art on campus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CBC news segment on the repudiation of the Doctrine of Discovery - A Musqueam View of UBC Campus - UBC campus timeline - UBC building names - Renaming an elementary school: CBC, Musqueam - Coast Salish Design Elements - UBC Reconciliation Pole - Musqueam Day and the Guerin Decision
	Stories and power	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Raven Tales, Episode 1 - Stolen Children: Residential School survivors speak out - Chapter 1 of <i>Tsawalk: A Nuu-chah-nulth Worldview</i> by Umeek E. Richard Atleo
	Knowledge and power Short assignment 3: Summarizing exercise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Squamish and Tseil-Waututh - “White Ignorance” by Charles Mills - “Recognizing Settler Ignorance in the Canadian Truth and Reconciliation Commission” by Anna Cook
	How to write a philosophy essay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “Guide for Writing a Philosophy Paper” by Jeffrey Kaplan - APA Citation Guide
	Land and water, ethics and politics Short assignment 4: Essay warm-up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “Braiding Kinship and Time: Indigenous Approaches to Environmental Justice” by Kyle Whyte - The Serviceberry” by Robin Wall Kimmerer

		- The Sparrow Case
	Art and power I: stereotype	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Selections from A Discourse Upon The Origin and the Foundation of the Inequality Among Mankind by Jean-Jacques Rousseau - “The Construction of the Imaginary Indian” by Marcia Crosby - “Genomic Articulations of Indigeneity” by Kim TallBear”
	Art and power II: appropriation Short assignment 5: Authenticity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Ethics: From an Artist’s Point of View” by V. F. Cordova - “Retitling, Cultural Appropriation, and Aboriginal Title” by Michel-Antoine Xhignesse
	Art and power III: resistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “Raven Weaves Light” by Christie Lee - “Skoden” by the Snotty Nose Rez Kids - Transcript of “Skoden” lyrics - “In The Gutter” by Michael Nicoll Yahgulanaas - “Art opens windows to the space between ourselves,” TED talk by Michael Nicoll Yahgulanaas - Selections from Nishga by Jordan Abel
	Land and worldview Short assignment 6: Exam warm-up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - C̓snaʔəm, The City Before the City - Ravens and Eagles Season 2, Episode 8: Athlii Gwaii: The Line at Lyell - The Gwaii Haanas Legacy Pole - What Made This Haida Clan Potlatch So Historic? - Introduction to Tsawalk: A Nuu-chah-nulth Worldview by Umeek E. Richard Atleo

Additional resources

- [Indigenous Foundations Website](#)
- [Native Land Digital](#)
- [CBC Landback Podcast](#)
- [Walking Tour of Musqueam House Posts on Campus](#)

Additional readings

- [Indian Status: 5 Things you Need to Know \(CBC\)](#)
- [“Indigeneity and US Settler Colonialism” by Kyle Whyte](#)
- [Josiah Wilson, the Indian Act, Hereditary Governance and Blood Quantum: Can You Be Indigenous Without Indigenous Blood? \(CBC\)](#)
- [Switched at Birth, Two Canadians Discover their Roots at 67 \(New York Times\)](#)
- [“Cultural Appropriations and Identificatory Practices in Emily Carr's ‘Indian Stories’” by Janice Stewart](#)
- [“Notes on Appropriation” by Loretta Todd](#)
- [“The Wave” and *Red: A Haida Manga* by Michael Nicoll Yahgulanaas](#)
- [Devoured by Consumerism by Beau Dick](#)
- [“Haida Manga: An Artist Embraces Tragedy, Beautifully” by Marie Mauzé](#)
- [Learning With Syeyutsus: *Tsawalk - A Nuu-chah-nulth Approach to Global Crisis* with Richard Atleo](#)